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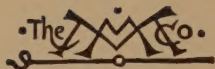
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HE IS BECOME MY SONG



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TORONTO

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

CARMEN JESU NAZARENI

BY

EDITH ANNE STEWART ROBERTSON

4096

EVANGELICAL
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

NEW YORK

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1930

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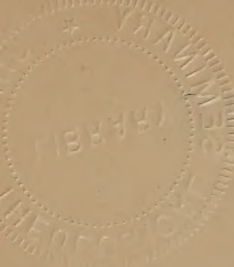
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TO

JAMES ALEXANDER ROBERTSON

WHO PLANNED AND DIRECTED ALL THAT IS BEST IN THIS WORK

LOVED WHAT IS GOOD IN IT

PARDONED THE REST

The author wishes to thank *The Nation*, *The British Weekly*, *The Record of the Church of Scotland*, and *Greatheart* for permission to reprint parts of this work which first appeared in their pages.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN the terrible autumn of 1916 I had occasion, in passing, to spend a few hours in one of the most beautiful capitals of Europe. I chose for my companion and guide a certain acquaintance, who, like myself, had been eliminated from active service. It is foolish, I think, to pretend, as some have done, that it was possible in those days to do something else just as noble as to face death freely. So long as man remains mortal his richest gift will be his own life. But at the same time, we know, a common sense of decency and loyalty provoked those outside the armies to take a new and more serious view of duty than ever before. It was in this sensitive and heightened frame of mind that I found my companion that afternoon, and as he outlined to me the processes of his severe and disciplined thinking upon a certain great theme, he seemed to me to take his place naturally and fitly in a heroic society. And I, who had been groping along the same paths of thought, and had since some little time become conscious of a task set, suddenly saw in this mind certain materials necessary to the accomplishment of that task, materials which hitherto I had lacked. Some parallel sense of intellectual reinforcement was, I believe, at the same time taking place in my companion's mind. Slowly we drifted hither and thither, conscious as little of the roar of traffic at one moment, as, at another, of the ruined silences beyond; only called back

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

to external circumstance by the sight of a great star blossoming in sun-forsaken skies.

Soon we met again. This time I made my immense request. My debt to those who had fallen in battle was not to be repaid. That could not be. But I wanted to raise a little wayside memorial, a poem, the poem that is printed here, the *Carmen Jesu Nazareni*. "Will you help me to write it?" I said. "You have the necessary critical scholarship, the historical insight, the theological ballast." We were walking by the seashore at the time; it was low tide, I can remember, and the sea gulls were fluttering and chattering in the pools; but my friend only paused in his walk, and watched them absently, and made no answer. A fortnight later, by post, his acquiescence came, too lightly asked, perhaps, but not too lightly, though most freely, given.

From that time until now the work has gone on: midway we were married, and as new tasks multiplied, the pace slackened. It is for others to judge if many interruptions have lowered the quality of the work. I would like to think not. I would like to believe that the life of the writer, like that of other honest men and women, is best lived when it shares the dust and heat of common days. I would like to believe that a task accomplished in a sound-proof chamber and behind drawn blinds loses some warm, frail, human quality that a task lit up by the constant illumination of other activities may retain.

I wish to record my very grateful thanks to Professor Adolphus A. Jack of Aberdeen University for his most generous advice and help in revising the manuscript.

E. A. S. R.

Aberdeen, February, 1930.

BOOK I

The Galilean Days

PRELUDE

I, Jasper, saw and heard those things, and write
Now, in fair copy, what, on many a night,
Just as things happened, I had noted down
Before I slept, hiding within my gown
A little scroll. What I am, whence I came,
Matters to none. I am a little flame,
A little dust. . . . One day, my face being set
From Esdraelon's Plains, toward Nazaret,
I saw, not far off, through the city gate,
Tumble and pour, a heaving, roaring spate
Of frightened creatures. "Make for the precipice!"
Someone screamed, "and finish this!"
"Traitor to His native town!
Blasphemer! Fling Him down!"
And "Over the edge!" cried one,
And "Hang Him!" another cried.
"Who?" said I, "and what has He done?
Has He broken the Sabbath, or stolen a bride?"
But none of the rabble gave heed
To my questions, and fearing indeed
To follow them further, I turned and stayed
In the shadowy peace of an oaken glade. . . .

A footstep roused me, and a figure stood
Close by, within the shadow of the wood,
Half-grave, half-smiling, no wise seeing me,
But bending toward a red anemone,
And murmuring,

"Even Solomon
With all his kingly splendors on

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Was naught, was naught, compared with thee,
Thou little red anemone!
And didst thou sit all night and spin
To make that robe so fine and thin?
And didst thou toil all day to find
Dyes of so deep and rare a kind?"

He saw me then and turned, and eagerly
He said, half to Himself, and half to me:
"If God so clothe the meadow-grass
Which flowers to-day, and to-morrow must pass
Into the furnace, much more He
Cares for such as you and Me."

It seemed as if some wave of sorrow
Had swept Him shuddering toward a dark to-morrow,
And He had taken courage from that flower
Which God's care dressed so fine for her brief hour.
The crowd had faded like a dream; the hill
Lay in the evening sunshine doubly still
By reason of the tumult lately there.
We mounted silently till on a bare
And windy height He stayed, and stretched His hand
Outward, and musing said:

"My Fatherland!
See Esdraelon's brown plains sweep
South till Samaria's hills grow steep:
Yonder is Jebel Duh's cone:
And look where Tabor towers alone.
And far, yet clear, that ridge of cliff
Tilted eastward, cliff on cliff,
And shelving gently toward the plain,
Is Gilboa. Mist and rain
Hide a broken mountain chain

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Rising up by Sheikh Iscander—"

He paused, and turned toward the pillared thunder,
Brooding portentous over Carmel's skies,
And gazed upon the Peak of Sacrifice
In silent reverie; then drew my eyes
To where the white sea-horses forever play
Circle-wise in Acre's hollow bay:
And where, far north, whiter than whitest foam
Of wildest seas, dreams Hermon's snowy dome.

"You look," He said, "with unmoved eyes

On all that now before us lies;

But I, a son of Israel,

See what you see, and more as well;

Dim figures from an earlier age

Flit across the antique stage:

Yonder on Tabor like a star

Deborah gazes from afar,

Divinely, on the fighting kings

Beneath, by Kishon's water-springs.

And there across the valley lies

Endor, where Saul's bewitched eyes

Saw the dead seer, and knew that he

To-morrow with the dead must be.

There is Gilboa where he lay

Prone with Jonathan next day.

Through yon drenching thunder-blast

Comes Elijah, racing fast

Behind, beside, before the wheel

Of Ahab's chariot, toward Jezreel:

Still on the rocky hillock lower

The ancient keep, the frowning tower.

And where the shadows chase each other

Down Carmel's slopes, I see a mother,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

The desperate weeping Shunammite
From her panting ass alight,
And clasp the prophet's feet, and there
Unburden all her dark despair."

He slowly turned, and looked on me
His first long look, and tranquilly
He said, "I sleep out here alone,
But I will tell you of someone
Yonder in Nazaret, where you might
Find rest and comfort for the night.
I was brought up in Nazaret
And love it dearly—even yet."

I asked about the rabble that afternoon.
Had He been there? What had the dead man done?
"Passing through the midst of them
He went His way. And soon He came
Into yon quiet woodland glade:
I am the man you thought was dead!
I began to preach to-day
In our synagogue, but they
Who heard Me thought I went too far
For an unschooled carpenter. . . .
How cold they were, and always I hear
Voices calling from Gentile places,
And dream of kindlier Gentile faces,
And yet—and yet—though they be cold,
These are My people, My own household."

I found the little inn He had named: the air
Was pricked with agitated murmurs . . . "Where? . . .
O, where is He?" . . . One tall and fiery child
Who seemed less boy than angel when he smiled,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Less angel now than infant while he mourned
Some treasure lost or prisoned, swiftly turned
To me, and asked if I had heard or seen
Aught of the riot. I told him I had been
Thereafter with their Master, left Him well,
Alone upon the hills. "Will you not tell
Something to me, of Him?" So John began:

JOHN'S FIRST NARRATIVE

Divinely did my Angel-Watcher plan
That I should have come down
From Salem's town—
From Beth-ha-Midrash homeward hied
On holiday, at Paschal-tide;
From priests and parchments free,
To pass the hours in sunny Galilee.
And I had joined the fisher folk,
And was baiting fishhooks, when they spoke
About their trip to Jordan. They told me
They'd take me if I cared to go and see
The Baptist with them. There was James my brother,
Andrew, and Simon. So we four together
Reached the great Ferry. Lo! standing there,
John, the Baptizer, in gown of camel hair,
Half in the running stream:
Lit by one long moonbeam,
One clear cold ray;
He urged us sinful men
To turn, to turn, to turn again
From the old way
Of idle ease, and pray.
He paused there; and then seemed
To flame anew toward heaven.
And while the far-off moon that even

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Serenely, coldly dreamed
Her silent dreams, his flaming prayer
Blazed far beyond the moon:
"Lord God, come soon,
Come soon, come soon!"

Next afternoon we came
To him, and were baptized:
And then, at John's command,
We joined his band;
Not Simon: he will be advised
By no man ever; he girds himself and goes
His own way always; yon swaying, surging crowd
Fell on their knees, and left him still unbowed.

Now, just as I emerged
From the baptismal font, a blue pool verged
Knee-deep with purple lilies, and walled round
With cane and oleander and tall fern;
I saw the Baptist turn
Toward the rising ground;
I also turned and spied
Ten old ecclesiastics, side by side,
Beckoning him
With gestures grim.
I saw John go
And speak with them, but heard
Of all their speech no word,
Till, as he frowning came away,
He paused, and then I heard him say:
"Even to-day
Standeth here among you He
Who cometh after me;
I am not worthy to stoop down
And loose the latchet of His shoon:

THE GALILEAN DAYS

With water I baptize . . ." What inward dread
Mastered him here I know not; his voice broke,
No more he spoke,
But bowed his head,
And through the crowd there spread
A brooding hush. From the white marl near by
A pair of storks uprose and silently
Faded into the forest, and all the folk
Watched them in silence, thoughts far elsewhere.

Then, like a sudden gust of wind, there broke
Across that halcyon air
One common eager thirst
For baptism, and all the vast crowd burst,
Like children loosed from school,
Pell-mell toward the pool:
Their heedless feet
Trod down the sweet
Pale lilies, and like snow
The cistus petals fluttered to and fro:
A thousand rods of asphodel lay low,
Crushed in the mire,
Gold spire by spire.

Some of the crowd laughed, and some wept,
But like a kindled fire
The Baptist leapt
Upon a low rock, and broke into speech
Volcanic, bitter: "Soon your bones will bleach
In the hot desert of the wrath of God!
Think you that I can stop
The blazing fire of God's wrath with a drop
Of muddy water? Turn,
You coward viper brood, and face His wrath

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

With armored life
At fruitful strife
Against the sins that heap up fuel in His path.
O turn, O turn!
Who beats not down the fire, himself therein must burn."

Like flies upon the plain
See how the old priests wend
Their homeward way; nine in one line extend,
The tenth has turned again,
And now he halts as if he were advised
To come to John and be baptized.
Yet, no,
He tarries but to go,
After a moment's wavering, with the rest,
Tho' with reluctant feet, sadder than they
To have to say
It was an idle quest.

I heard no more of what John said that day,
For just then Andrew and I were called away
To gather fruits and honey and prepare
Some corn for supper. But from a tamarisk tree
Near by, which we had both climbed, we could see
The Baptist still baptizing in the stream
Till sundown. Then when all the rest were gone
There came Another One;
He seemed to beg for baptism, and John
Half-seemed to say Him no;
But then we saw the gleam
Of the last level sunbeam gild his hair
Into an aureole as He stood there
Pure from the laving stream;
And as He made to go
We saw the Baptist bending low

THE GALILEAN DAYS

To kiss His feet; and in the dusk above,
Like benediction given
By well-pleased heaven,
One hovering white-winged dove.

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Six weeks passed by;
Simon, here, went back home, Andrew and I
Still served the Baptist, but we often thought
Of what we had seen from the tamarisk tree,
And often sought
That Figure in the crowds, and often would see
Someone like Him, yet still it was not He.

THE FESTAL DAY

Then, like all other days,
At last the great day came;
We took our common ways,
And all things seemed the same.

No festal robe we wore,
No festal chant sang we,
Nor did we fast before
This great festivity.

The heavenly temple wall
Stole round us unaware;
The heavenly festival,
Or ere we knew was there.

Sad speech broke into singing,
Moonshine to clear sunshine,
The marriage bells were ringing,
The water turned to wine.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Jesus was there beside us. Radiant
He stood, talking with God, and saw no man;
Nor heard the wild fowl of the wilderness
Singing their Paschal songs. The Jordan ran
Unheeded at His feet.
Marvelously sweet
It was to stand there looking on the Face
Which made a holy temple of that desert place.

Withdrawn, entranced, motionless, unaware
Of the astonished crowd that gathered there—
You would have said that on that river strand
God stood and talked with God; down the still air
Came floating murmured words, half-psalm, half-prayer:

“I did not see Thy naked Hand
Curve round this lamp which Thou hadst planned
And trimmed and filled; but while I dreamed
In the fierce wilderness, it seemed
Thy kindling Hand upon me came,
And the full wick leapt into flame.
Now lighted by that flame I see
A world of seekers seeking Thee.
Blaze forth from this frail bowl of clay,
O Fire of God, and light their way!”

Called from this holy rapture by the sound
Of tramping feet, He wheeled abruptly round,
And gazed upon the wondering folk a space
In musing silence, the while every face
Sought His, and waited; wistfully He gazed
Upon us all, then clear His voice upraised:

“Dawn, Redemption! Wake! Arise!
Lift up those stricken eyes!
Wilderness and dry parched land
Stir to feel the time at hand.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

The night of grief was dark and long,
But fear not now, for with a song
God will come and save us; he
That hath eyes to see will see;
He that hath ears to hear will hear;
God's salvation draweth near.
Sing! For you may turn away
From sin, and see God's Realm to-day.
You may turn away from sin
And come, to-day, and enter in!"

His voice was low; He did not strive nor cry:
Its modulations mingled musically
With the low melody
Of Jordan's many waters, yet rang clear;
And many folk were gathering here;
Even the Baptist had forsaken
His rocky pulpit, and come down the stream,
And now he stood like one but half-awaken
Or like one in a waking dream.
It seemed he did not hear
The Stranger's words so much as mark His mien.
"Where has He been,"
I heard him murmur, "all those forty days?
And what new marks are these engraven on His face,
As though He had been wrestling in some fearful
place?"

Just then a bleating flock of lambs we spied
Upon the road, bound for the Holy City—
It was the Paschal season; with sudden pity
Foreign to his stern speech, John cried,
"Poor little lambs, soon to be tied
Upon the altar, you know not
Your sacred and mysterious lot!

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And yet I hear a prophecy
In that sad pleading human cry."

Amazèd we stood by,
Marveling to see that shaggy countenance
So charmed and softened suddenly, the while
His soul from her clear windows forth did glance,
And pause, and smile:
Amazèd too we heard
The harsh voice, that of late had rasped and whirred
Like thirsty grasshoppers in withered grass,
Thrill like the first notes of some April bird
Who sees her sweet mate pass.
And, even as he spoke of sacrifice,
The Baptist's eyes,
Drawn by a heavenly magnet, turned
From gazing on the Paschal lambs to gaze
On Jesus' face.

As we watched, our hearts burned
To see these twain. The Baptist all amaze
And tremulous, and Jesus' face full still,
Rapt far from earth. O yes, our hearts were stirred
By this high meeting; so beneath the hill
The small tarn stirs to feel a stray breath move
From the great winds that sweep the heights above.

And, when we two lads heard
And saw these things, there woke
In us a need to be
With Jesus; each his cloak
And staff without a word
Took up and went. When He
Heard us, He half-turned and said,
"Children, what seek ye?"
And faltering I began, "Master, may we
Know where you lay your head?"

THE GALILEAN DAYS

O, how dared I?
Perhaps I heard some cry
From the deep vastness of my spirit's home
Bidding my wandering self welcome:
Yet ere the words were out
He turned full round about
With joyful invitation, "Come and see!"
We followed Him to Jordan's side,
And stayed with Him till eventide.

At dusk there came a Pharisee,
And greeted Jesus courteously.
Gnarled and grey and bent was he,
Like an ancient sea-blown tree;
And, by his stoop and wild, thin silver hair,
We recognized
The wavering priest who late had lagged behind
As if he had a mind
To be baptized.

"Ten of us," he said, "were sent to John
To ask him if he were the Chosen One,
And John said, 'Nay,'
But, as I turned away,
Whispered, 'Yet He is near';
And I came here,
I hardly can say why . . .
Rabbi . . . Rabbi . . .
Thou surely art a Teacher sent from God, and I
Desire to see God's Kingdom ere I die."

Grief was writ on his face,
An old parched face that shook
Like Autumn's latest leaf upon the tree:
And Jesus took
A towel and cool water, and kneeled—while we
Stood by ashamed—and washed his feet

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And brought him food to eat,
And then said, "He who thinks to see
The things you now desire to see
Must turn and be a little child again."
Ah, what pain
In the old man's answering cry:
"How can I,
Grown old and dry
In teaching others, now put all that by,
And send myself to school again?"

He paused, and moaned, and gasped for breath;
And Jesus, musing, made reply:

"If flesh and blood span life and death,
We are once born and once we die.
Whither we go, whence we have come
We know as little as we know
From whence this vagrant breeze doth blow
(See how it stirs the vines that roam
Along our roof); yet it has come—
This we are sure—has come from home,
Stirring within a homesick heart
Till all other desires depart,
Save this insatiable pain
Of longing to be home again,
Then whispering, 'Wake, O heart, and see
Thou art at home who art in Me.'
He is not born who doth descry
Things seen alone, nor can he die
Who has put by his blinding sin
And seen God's Realm, and entered in."

We could not tarry, for the old man wept;
So softly forth we crept
Beneath the rustling vine.
Ah, water after wine

THE GALILEAN DAYS

The pale moonshine on Jordan's streams
After the dazzling beams
We had beheld: for we
Beheld strange glory there:
Jesus had bid us come and see,
And there we saw, beyond our holiest dreams,
A veil withdrawn, and Grace and Truth laid bare.

John's chief disciples came that night
To Jesus: "Do we grasp aright
This reckless hospitality
You now ascribe to heaven, for we
Entered with many a fear and prayer
And bitter fast? *We* did not dare
To dash into the Kingdom in one day."

Then Jesus answered them, "One day
Two men went to church to pray.
The first stood out and prayed aloud,
'I am both thankful, God, and proud
To say that twice a week I fast,
Tithes of all I take lay past.
Foul adulterer nor rogue
Nor thief am I, nor, to be sure,
Am I like yonder evil doer.'
Thus wound up his monologue.
But the other one, shame-fast,
Stood far back with eyes down-cast,
Smote his breast: 'O God,' said he,
'I am a sinner, pity me.'
I tell you he took the way
To find God's Kingdom in one day."

The Baptist's followers
Seemed but perplexed the worse;
Muttering they took their lamps and strayed
Drifting through the dark, like frail, winged seeds

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Here and there
On the uncertain air;
Hither and thither swayed,
Like wind-shaken reeds.
And so the great Revival, like a river
Encountering rocks, divided. Yet there never
Was seen distrustful look, nor ever heard
Impatient word
Between the Baptist and this Other One:
Courteously each fared
His chosen way: this was the cry of John:
"Repent, for now God's wrath is near!"
Jesus raised no countercry,
But listened to him silently,
Held, I think, by gracious fear
Of hurting one so fine, so dear,
Yet times, by Jordan shore
He spoke good tidings of a wide-flung door
To some sad loiterers
Or hungry questioners.
"Repent," He said, "the Kingdom is here,
And full forgiveness: do not fear.
See, standing open wide before
Your face the heavenly Kingdom's door!"

Philip and Nathanael joined us soon,
And many another one.
And Jesus found
The crowds, that late did mourn and weep
Beneath John's rugged bema, gather round
Our cave's mouth often, ere He rose from sleep,
Shaming the dawn with their bright eyes
And happy faces; and we would baptize
These joyful folk long ere sunrise,
As John the Baptist bade us do:
For ever they were friends, those mighty two.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

But then, one night, led by the dying moon
The Baptist stole away to Aenon.
Jesus was overwhelmed, I could but see,
With shame and sharp perplexity;
And in the morning, chill and early,
He woke us lads and said:
"I fear I serve my friend unfairly;
Rather, than hurt him, I were dead;
We must go home to Galilee."

We went by Aenon to bid farewell
To John; how can I tell
Of that last meeting of this diverse pair?
"I go, till God call Me again,
Back to My workshop," said our Lord;
"If His great prophet's star should wane
Ere to the zenith it had soared,
A grieving God would wait in vain
Lost sheep He might have turned again."

John kissed his Cousin's hand;
He knelt, but Jesus bade him stand,
And kissed his lips, saying, "Blest is he
Who is not vexed because of Me."
As once before, I marked the tender light
Sweep over John's grim face:
"Who could be vexed because of Thee, by night
Or day, who loved Thee, Jesus? To this place
I came lest being vexed I should repent:
Ah, but it was a feeble fear, soon spent,
A flickering rush-light . . ."

Long hours lingering
By Aenon's emerald spring,
These twain conferred; and then we went

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Over the hills, and reached the great North road
At high noon day
And Jesus rested by the way,
While we lads went to Shechem to buy food.

AT THE WELL

I went to Jacob's well,
And there He sat whose face
Seemed the sad parable
Of my dark soul's disgrace.

Weary His face, soiled, pained,
Homesick, and ah, His feet—
His feet with dust were stained,
While mine with nard were sweet.

The vulgar bantering word
Leapt from me: all at ease
Was I, nor guessed who heard,
Nor which crossroads were these.

I did not understand
His words of joy or sorrow,
But in her Fatherland
He bade my soul good-morrow.

Before such courtesy
The brazen demon fled;
Trembling and bare stood I,
So stripped of hardihead.

"Sir, give me now to drink!"
"Soon, soon thou mayest sup,
Thou standest at the brink
But Conscience must be cup.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Go, call thy husband here—"

"Oh turn away those eyes,
They fill me full of fear . . .
Beneath the grass he lies . . .

No husband, Sir, have I."

"You do speak truth," said He;
But still my Lord must try
To show myself to me.

Yet still I dared evade—

Lo! yonder Gerizim:
His glances might be stayed
If I but questioned Him.

"Lord, do men worship best
Here, or by Salem's tower?"
Nay, still He comes on quest,
Still tarries at my door!

"It makes no difference
To God, or here or there:
The tears of penitence
The place of praise or prayer.

And dost thou seek for rest?
Wilt thou from sin depart?
The place to worship best
Is from a broken heart."

Ah, must this heart not break,
To see Him so forlorn?
There sits He, for my sake
Outwearied and outworn.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Patiently Thou dost wait,
Forspent with seeking me,
And Thou art come too late:
I have no gifts for Thee.

Pleasure's frail pitchers lie
All shattered—"Lord, depart!
Would'st have my misery?
Would'st have my broken heart?

She who but yesterday
Was I, now is a dream
Floating like foam away
Upon a phantom stream;

Floating away unwept,
For nothing good or fair
Or worthy to be kept
Was ever hidden there.

Her love long lost in lust,
Her mighty beauty dead,
Her passions turned to dust—"Ah, Miriam, then I must
Have thy best gift instead,
Thy broken heart," He said.

One day we tarried with some merchantmen,
Returning Tyrians watering their train;
And, when the camels took the road again,
These merchants bade us up and ride
On this or that half-loaded side.
These packs had all been filled, they said,
With purple hangings for Herodias' bed,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

And silken cushions and fine scarlet cloth :
And had we heard about this new bride's wrath
Against the Baptist, and how, to please her whim,
Herod had taken and imprisoned him?
Our Master had no word for them or us,
His mighty spirit like a storm-roofed sea
Lay, we did mark, upheaved and tenebrous ;
But later, in the dusk, He said to me :
 "A sound of gentle stillness came
 After the earthquake and the flame :
 Clear now to Me My Father's will ;
 What John began I must fulfill."

Then Silence spread her cloak on Him,
Nor did He speak until the stars grew dim
Next day above the shores of Galilee,
And all the fisher folk
Were stirring, and the smoke
Of kindled fires curled blue
Up gardens pearled with dew,
And April ditties fluted from the quay.
Then Jesus halted on the shelving beach and spoke :
 "News! Good news! Our God is near!
 See His herald standing here!
 Long have you walked in darkness, driven
 And torn, but seeking still for heaven.
 Questing of late by Jordan's stream
 You heard the Baptist's voice proclaim
 'The Great Day of the Lord is near,'
 And, as the saplings in the grove
 Beneath the winds of morning move,
 You moved and swayed with hope and fear ;
 And, as the willow branches quiver
 While they touch the passing spray,
 You trembled, while the sacred river

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Laved your crimson guilt away,
But only Hope may speak of sin,
And Hope is fainting in your eyes,
And Fear has sharpened his edge so thin
That you but wait for vengeance. Nay,
That is not your Father's way!

Have you not heard, have you not known?
Your Father sits on heaven's throne.
Did you not know it when your eyes
Encountered first the midnight skies?
Did you not feel it as you stayed
Beside the knees of her who prayed
In tones made very soft and mild
For the understanding of a child?
What was this which came to Me
Just beyond where I might see?
What voice was that so warm and dear
Just beyond where I might hear?
Whose Presence that I thrilling felt
While by My mother's knees I knelt?
Closer it came until I saw,
Clearlier spoke until I heard;
And when, according to the Law,
First to the Paschal feast I fared,
Beyond nearness close it came,
And the secret was unsealed
Of His Presence; and His Name
On starlit Olivet revealed.
He who had meek and lowly come
With lowly lad to make His home,
And who His Kingdom's keys had given
To a child's heart, was King of Heaven.
Shepherd of all the stars was He,
And yet He deigned to visit Me!

THE GALILEAN DAYS

He showed this simple little one
His glory, and still He called Him, Son.

And when our half-fledged brood was left
Of mortal father's care bereft,
This heavenly Father drew more near
Than could to outward eye appear;
Unseen, yet there in happy truth;
And in His care my wild thoughts ranged
Along the perilous paths of youth.

Many a secret we exchanged,
Intimate, and close, and dear;
O brothers, surely Redemption is near,
Surely the Kingdom is close at hand
When God goes up and down our land!
Brothers, why should you tremble and fear
When your Father draweth near?

Your Father's tender heart is yearning
For His children's safe returning:
And your hearts are yearning too;
Faith's deep-lighted eyes forth drew
Your vigilant feet to Jordan's shore.

There God was knocking at the door:
There stirred within your hearts the rumor
Of an Advent joy. So Summer

Hath her herald winds who sigh
In budding fig-boughs, 'She is nigh!'

Even the desert ways rejoice,
Even in the wilderness the voice
Of music wakens. Sweetly blows
In solitary hearts the rose.

—Haply to you these words may be
But a far-off prophecy?

Verily, I answer, Nay.

With John the prophets passed away:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Now we prophesy no more,
Now the ship has reached the shore.
Now the heavenly Kingdom stands
In the hollow of your hands;
All the lights of prophecy
Pale, like stars at dawn, and die."

So Jesus spoke that morning by the Sea,
And many mornings more; and rapturously
The people heard. And when He praised John so,
One humble soul would go,
And then another, and say, "Your words are true."
I saw three painted girls
Unload their gauds and pearls
With lingering joy before His feet,
Whispering, "First John, then you
Showed us how bitterly must end our sweet;
John showed a better way,
But yours is best:
Now these dark souls have rest
Now breaks for us the day!"
One jeered, "The fasting John was mad,
But this one's fast—a merry lad!"
"Rascal! How dare you touch my cloak?"
Snarled a scribe whose cloak had been
Grazed, and no more, at the fringes' end,
"A pest on all you shady folk
That pride themselves they are as clean
As true Law-keepers—"

"Friend,"
Said Jesus, "Here's a word for you!
A father said to his elder boy,
'Go, my son, and find employ

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Tying and pruning the vines to-day,'
'Yea,' the lad said, quick and gay,
But went not. 'Then you must go,'
He said to the younger, and he said 'No!'
But afterward he did repent,
And down into the vineyard went."
Then Jesus said, "Which of these two
Did the father's will, think you?
And publicans and harlots go
Into the Kingdom in front of you
And tho' those poor folk whom you scorn
Stayed long outside, despised, forlorn,
They are come in now, and since they
Find gladness, would you say them nay?
O can your cold hearts not applaud
The generosity of God?
God is like a householder
Who forth at rise of sun doth stir
Hiring laborers to tend
His vines till working hours have end.
At last when night is come, the lord
Of the vineyard calls his steward;
'Bring the laborers in,' says he,
'And pay to each his proper fee.'
But every man receives the same,
Whether he late or early came.
And so the men who first were hired
With furious jealousy are fired:
'We bore the burden and the heat
Of the long day. It is not meet
Or fair that you should now deal thus
With them, and not give more to us!'
Then, to that man who spoke, the lord
Replied, 'I gave you the reward

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

I promised you, I have not done
You ill. Take this and get you gone!
It is my will these last should have
As much as to the first I gave:
And may I not do what I choose,
With what is mine to hold or lose?"

And so," said Jesus, turning round,
"The last among the first are found.
Happy are the empty hands
Held out within those unseen lands;
Happy the penitential eyes
God's own hand in pity dries;
Happy the meek, whose bended faces
Find, at their feet, the holy places;
For here, who hungers after good
Feasts always on heavenly food;
Here, who thirsts to do God's will
Drinks for evermore his fill;
Here, to the merciful man God's song
Of mercy echoes all day long;
Here the single-hearted see
God's face continually."

Then Jesus blessed us, rose, and moved away;
But ere He went, He paused again to say,
"You have heard,
Have you understood My word?"
And we answered, "Yea."

"Because," said He, "the ancient page
Reveals to scribes through love grown sage
New wisdom shining in the old.
Like a householder am I
Who takes from out his treasury

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Things set aside as worn and vain,
But in God's Realm made new again."

.

John was drowsy and nodded; but still I plied
Question after question, till Peter said:
"Leave the lad alone, and go to bed!
There! I've drawn his tent-door." As he spoke
Peter slipped from underneath his cloak;
Covered sleepy John from head to heel,
Turned to me: "The night's young; if you feel
Hungry still to hear about the Master,
I can talk as fast as John, and faster."

"Tell me then," I answered, "does He say
Undeserving idlers ever stray
Toward that Kingdom? Is there gate of entrance
Opening on that City, save repentance?
Must all men struggle with the weight of sin?
Do none by patient seeking enter in?
Or are there some, through storm and heat and strife,
climb
Upward, yet not find it in a lifetime?
And what of souls who are not found, nor find?
Faded are these, like dreams, from out God's mind?"

PETER'S FIRST NARRATIVE

Man, said Peter, each of these your questions
Had its answer pat, the day He called me—
O, so long as this tent still enfolds me,
I shall wear that moment, like a jewel

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Blazing in my heart, when I saw Jesus
Pause beside *my* boat, and gaze upon me,
While He begged to have the boat for pulpit.
Brother, His is the immortal beauty,
His the meek and quiet spirit; neither
Meek nor quiet mine, so I adore Him.
Then He spoke: my surly, trembling fingers
Plied the nets, more clumsy with amazement:
Yes, indeed, the Master's words were sunny;
Yet—there was a bright dividing sword
Glittering in the sunshine. . . . Hear His answers
To your questions. There were many asking
Just what you ask, since He preached the Kingdom.

“Yes,” said He, “the Realm of heaven
May to unworthy souls be given;
Men stumble on it unawares,
Like a loiterer who fares
Through the fields, and finds hid treasure
At his feet, and, wise with pleasure,
Sells all he has, and goes and buys
That field; so be ye heavenly wise,
And if one day your Father's face
Flash from the fields of commonplace,
Or, while you touch His humblest clod,
Your finger feels the pulse of God,
Repent and turn, for you are given
In that hour the keys of heaven.

And do some seek, you ask, yet stand
Always outside the promised land?
Nay, there is no man who has striven
Toward good he knew, who is not given
The best, in time, if he can part
With all the treasures of his heart

THE GALILEAN DAYS

For this one best. A merchant buying
Goodly pearls, some great pearl spying,
Sells all his lesser pearls and buys
The marvelous pearl which now he spies:
So, while ye seek, turn not your mind
From seeking, till at length you find;
And finding, wonder: wondering, win
The Realm of God, and rest therein."

There, said Peter, are your questions answered:
Be you idle lout or earnest seeker
One day you will wake upon that threshold,
See the Realm of God. But you may enter
Only if you fling your good and evil,
Nay, your better and your best, behind you:
That's the price a man must pay for God's best.

Yet it was not either of these stories
Caught me—Simon; still my hands were busy
'Mid the nets and twine, and I had tangled
All the twine in knots: a knotty question
Tangled thought: I flung the needle from me,
Rose, and faced Him: maybe He could answer:
"What, supposing someone neither stumbles
On the Kingdom, nor has cared to seek it?"
Then the Master told the tale that caught me,
Told it just for me. No fisher-eagle,
Plunging toward her prey, has ever traveled
Swifter than that story of the dragnet
Traveled toward my heart. Here is the story.

"The inner Realm, the Realm of God
Is like a great net cast abroad
Over the waters of the world.
Through storm or tide all souls are hurled
Within, or haply unaware

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

On gentler currents drifted there:
God's net embraces every man;
Yet must his angels one day scan
That mighty haul, and separate
The worthless from the worthy: late
Or soon there comes a time to say
The unrighteous soul is castaway."

Me, He meant. He knew me: He had seen me
Blustering with the boat crews on the sea beach,
Calling God to deal with me in daylight;
He had seen me like a day in April,
Listening covertly to John the Baptist. . . .
Seen me—sometime—laughing at Gennezaret. . . .
Must have seen me weeping in the twilight.
Body of me! I like the man's clear eyesight,
Though I did not like it at that moment,
When I found myself before Him, crying,
"Lord, depart from me, a sinful creature!"
Found myself upon my face before Him,
Crying *that*—who wanted now forever
Just to have Him in the boat beside me.

"Lay down these nets," said Jesus then,
"And come with Me and fish for men . . ."

"Master, I will come," I cried; and Andrew
Cried the same; for since they'd come from Jordan,
Andrew, James, and John had followed Jesus
Only when John's busy father spared them.
"You will give your customers, the Romans,
Better food," He said, "than pickled fishes:
You will give them Good News of the Kingdom."

Hardly yet can I describe the Kingdom:
Jesus! He's my story—He's my Good News!

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Think! He came and stayed with us a fortnight.
When I saw the Master with my children,
Saw Him gently raise the good-wife's mother,
God—I knew then—meant men to be like Him:
God, I'm sure, must have a soul like Jesus.

Sabbath came: we went to church together;
Half Capernaum followed; rumor had it,
Jesus was to speak. Till now, our Master
Taught beside the sea, or on the uplands.
Might the glamour fade here in the city?
Cultured folk might be sophisticated.
Foolish fear of mine! That morning, Jesus
Spoke as one inspired, nor did He tremble
When He saw those listening, frozen faces
Slowly seething into consternation.
Quiet and serene He sat before them,
Speaking in the power of the Spirit
Which of old on Sinai spake to Moses.
While He talked the ancient Law towered splendid
Past all cavil: old scribe-mongered precepts
Stared and stuttered ghastly in our faces,
Like an evil dream that fain would fright us
Forth from seeking for the Face behind it.

"Not destroying nor defeating
Came I hither, but completing.
Law must end where it began—
In love to God and love to man.

Law says merely, *Do not kill*:
I say now, if you think ill
Of any man, though he be far,
And you before God's altar are,
Leave your gift upon the floor,
Go and knock at that man's door,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

There before his face confess
Humbly, your unfriendliness:
When the clouds of anger lift,
Come and offer up your gift.
Murder is mere outward sign,
Anger's token, pays the fine
In outward courts of law; but still
In dark recesses of your will
Angry thoughts are led to court,
Make in secret full report;
Yea, in heart's most inmost shade
Penalties must still be paid:
And the stern judges of that land
Have unseen jails at their command.

Law says merely, *Thou shalt not
Commit adultery*: you ought,
Further, to search your very heart,
Strangle lust there at the start:
Say, its earliest impulse springs
From your love of lovely things;
Better blind for evermore
Than make your eyes the devil's door.

Law says merely, *If you swear
You must scrupulously bear
All your oath exacts*: I say
Let your Yea, and let your Nay
Count as solemn pledge with you.
Never oath turned false word true,
Simple truth was never made
Less true, being simply said.

Yea, except you far excel
Scribes who think they do so well,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

You must know it is not given
You to reach the Realm of heaven.
O, believe Me when I say
Not one word shall pass away
From the Law till Israel reaches
Up to every truth it teaches;
Not one jot, till you have turned
The final page, and all is learned.
No least command divinely given
Ranks so low in sight of heaven
As he who, breaking it, would teach
Others who toward the Kingdom reach
Likewise to break it, while he stands
Outside the gates of heaven, his hands
Press against the bars to hold
Others from these gates of gold.
But high he stands in heaven's sight,
Who keeps the Law with all his might,
And, while he tithes his mint and dill,
Still is faithful to fulfill
The greater—while he minds the less—
Justice, mercy, faithfulness.

He who hears those words I say,
And acts upon them every day,
He is like a prudent man
Who built his house on rock, and then
When sudden tempests shake the skies,
And wild torrential streams arise,
That man's house withstands the shock,
For it is founded on the rock.
But he who listens to My word,
And acts as though he had not heard,
Like a foolish man is he,
Who builds his house on sand, and see,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

When sudden tempests shake the skies,
And wild torrential streams arise,
That man's house cannot withstand,
For it is founded on the sand."

Thus He ended. Fear and amazement
Turned the congregation into marble:
Maddened by the hush, an epileptic
Rushed before Him, screamed, and knelt down trembling:
"Leave us alone, Thou Jesus of Nazareth, leave us!
Leave us, begone! Why art Thou come hither to
grieve us?"

But Jesus turned and laid His hands
On the lad's head, and smoothed the strands
Of tangled hair. "Peace, peace," He said:
And straight the evil spirits fled.

Like a thunder-cloud the scribes departed,
While the people tarried in the porches
Whispering, "What is this? What mighty teaching!
Underived authority, not jargon!
Even the spirits are obedient to Him!
Strange! . . . He says, *I came*, and *I am sent here*."

Is' it any marvel, all that evening
Ere the sun was set they followed Jesus,
Pressed upon Him, brought their broken bodies,
Craving just to touch Him; since they heard Him,
Wonder-stricken; singing festive ditties,
While they surged at sun-down round our door step?
Still He stayed within, but still they clamored,
Shrieking out their woes across the shoulders
Rammed between them and the silent doorway,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Calling on Him to come out and settle
All their petty quarrels, all their problems,
Summoning Him to come and be their leader
Raise a great revolt against the Empire . . .
Long, long after the last cries had faded
Down the street, and left the city silent,
Jesus sat there nursing unknown sorrow.
Wondering sore, we went to bed at midnight.

Halfway through between midnight and morning,
Like a soft shadow someone passed my pallet
(We were sleeping on the roof for coolness) :
It was Jesus. I leaned on the cope-stone,
Half-awake, and watched Him hasten darkly
Down the steps, and gain the street, and vanish."

ON THE HILLS ABOVE CAPERNAUM

Father, I come to Thee again
Before the break of day:
Thy child is half-afraid, and fain
Would kneel by Thee and pray.

For when I use Thy friendly might
To still the demon's cries,
And use Thy pity to bring sight
Again to blinded eyes,

And when I heal their passing pain,
They haunt Me night and day;
But—when I offer heavenly gain,
They lightly turn away.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

They turn away with careless eyes:
Father, why should this be?
Say, must My pearl of Paradise
Be spilt in mire for Thee?

Thy stars are silent: faint and few
Through yon deep haze they shine:
No heavenly footfall prints the dew,
No hand is laid on Mine.

O God, untouched, unseen, unheard,
Thine Eastern deserts glow:
Light My heart's might with one clear word,
And I will rise and go.

On we went from town to town; the people
Heard Him gladly. Many asked Him questions:
"Tell us what it is that hides God from us?"
"Why are our eyes veiled, while your eyes see Him?"
"How are we not sure if we possess Him?"
"What does *selling all you have* amount to?". . .
All these questions found their shining answer
Clustered in one Sabbath talk my memory
Treasures, as they say pearls treasure sunlight.

"How shall God be manifest,
And shine within a human breast?
When anxious Fear and lean-eyed Care
No longer make their dwelling there,
Care, the corroding rust, and Fear,
The moth, that blights your earthly gear!

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Hungry, destroying thieves that spoil
The hard-won gains of daily toil;—
But when your heart has no delight
Save to keep its casements bright;
When your eyes have no desire
Save to burn with heavenly fire,
Then the light by which you see,
Is the light of eternity.
But without that holy light
How dreadful and how dark the night!
And that most dreadful darkness binds
Its bands around divided minds.
Choose the world: your way is dark:
Divide allegiance, lo! the spark
Of light soon fades from out the clod:
Ye cannot serve the world and God.
To serve the world? And still to be
More careful for the things you see,
Your meat, your drink, the clothes you wear
Than for the spirit harbored there?
Is not a human soul more worth
In God's eyes, than its house of earth?
Behold the birds of heaven, how they
Nor sow, nor reap, nor store away,
Yet God feeds them! And will not He
Who cares for birds of small degree
Care much more for you and Me?
Which of you, by mental strife,
Can add a minute to his life?
God who measures out your days,
Will surely care for you always.
See the lilies of the field:
They neither spade nor distaff wield,
And yet I tell you, Solomon
With all his kingly splendor on,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Was not arrayed like one of these.
If then your heavenly Father please
So to clothe the meadow flower
That blooms and passes in an hour,
How much more will He take care
That living souls go neat and fair?
There's one good coat upon your back;
Possessing this, what do you lack?
Children, how little you rely
On God's love when you sigh and sigh,
'Who will refill my empty barrel?
Who will renew my worn apparel?'
Nay, in this untrustful strain
Only pagan folk complain.
Bear no more than this day's sorrow:
Why add what may not come to-morrow?
Rather spill your cup of gladness
Over to-morrow than your sadness.
He knows your need of joy or pain:
Seek first your heavenly Father's Reign.

Lo! all things draw you. Wheeling birds
And the wild wandering flocks and herds,
The denizens of dust and sea
Are symbols of eternity:
They seek their home, and find it; they
Whisper of Home at close of day."

While He spoke we seemed to see the Kingdom:
Through His eyes our eyes beheld the Father.
But we went a day's march in the mountains,
Sullen, fretted by the hot sirocco
Driving clouds of sand across our faces;
Some lagged, shouting on the rest to tarry,
Some hung heavy on the arms of comrades,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

All of us were short and out of temper:
Strident words came crackling like the drought fires.
Jesus heard and looked at us in sorrow,
Shamed and troubled we made haste to ask Him:

"Master, Thou hast shown us God's forgiveness,
Heaven lies about us when Thou speakest,
Tell us why it fades while we are faring:
Why for us again the dusty highway?"
Then, like myrrh and balm to cleanse and comfort,
Came His words on man's and God's forgiveness.

"Even God forgives in vain,
And even heaven is shut amain,
If you bear not with your brother,
And show kind hearts to one another.
For what can mercy mean to one
Who hath himself ungracious shown?
Do you mercy here withhold?
You turn your heaven bare and cold.
But here on earth give mercy free,
And here on earth your heaven will be.
If your friend has wronged you, go,
Take him by himself and show
Where the fault lies; does he then
See it, you are friends again.
If you still cannot agree,
Bring together two or three,
And My Spirit will be there
And My Father hear your prayer,
Where two or three meet in My name,
I am in the midst of them."

"Lord," I cried, "how often shall my brother
Sin against me, and I still forgive him?"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Rabbis tell us *Three times*: say'st Thou *Seven*?"
Like a whirlwind came the amazing answer:
"Not seven times, but *seventy times seven*.

And do not proudly even then
Measure yourself by other men.
I tell you the forgiving spirit
Is a duty, not a merit.
For though you do the things I say,
Forgiving fifty times a day,
God's slaves for best or worst are ye.
No duty sets from duty free.
The weary yokels still prepare
At close of day their master's fare:
And God demands from all who live
That endlessly they shall forgive.
Contrast these small debts owing you
With all this vast debt standing due?
To God in His account-book—due?
Yes, but He has crossed it through!—
And could you now so much as look
Into your little ledger book,
Or ask your fellow man to pay,
Since God wiped all that debt away?"

Then there came a leper to Him, kneeling,
"Lord," He pleaded, "if you are but willing,
You have power to cleanse my dire uncleanness."
Silly soul, to think the Master's mercy
Was some magic trick apart from willing!
You or I would not dare touch a leper,
Selfish flesh is dainty, so we, cunning,
Call our squeamish nausea holy shrinking,
Prank our fear in robes of sacred ritual.
Where's our ritual now? The Master *touched* him!

THE GALILEAN DAYS

O that you had seen Him lay His two hands
Tenderly upon that leper's shoulders,
Hold him there a moment, softly murmuring
Little piteous phrases whose low music
Died into a hush of loving anguish!
So they stood, together, one in suffering,
Close embraced, the dreadful leper hidden
Deep in the red folds of Jesus' garment.
There's a ritual for you! There's forgiveness!
Himself took our sicknesses and Himself
Suffered our infirmities. That's Jesus!

Flashed then, surely, on His mind foreboding.
Ah, the worm that gnawed this rose of pity!
Ah, the thorn that marred this rod of healing!
He—the ruth of heaven—"wonder-worker,"
He—God's healthful anguish—"necromancer!"
Separate they stood now, Jesus frowning
While He chafed against those bitter visions,
Then He spoke: "Don't tell, don't tell a creature!
Softly to the Temple; give your offering;
Home then softly."

Poor soul, he went shouting,
Shouting to the very stones till sunset,
"Jesus healed me!" After that we dare not
Enter town or village, yet the people
Poured out to the desert places, crying,
"Come and heal us!" So that tour was ended.
Fugitive, we stole back to Capernaum.

.

Therewith I sought my candle, and thrilling, crept
To the small room where last night Jesus slept;
As one entranced, I took a pen and wrote
All I had heard, till sudden morning smote

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

The page with shafts of gold, and Simon came
And stood beneath my window, and called my name,
"Come down, come down, this little goatherd brings
Word from the Master, by Cana's water-springs
He summons us to meet Him: will you come
And walk with Jesus to Capernaum?"
Outside the northeast city gate we found
Matthew and Thomas likewise for Cana bound.
"Matthew," Peter said, "this man is eager
Most of all to hear about our Master.
Last night John and I told all our story.
Tell him yours. I told him of the leper
Just before we came into Capernaum:
You were sitting waiting by your toll-bench—
Might I not almost say waiting, Matthew?"

MATTHEW'S FIRST NARRATIVE

Well, yes, Simon, "waiting" if you will;
For all these hateful years I waited till
He came, and with a look discharged the bill.
From the toll-bench where I sat every day,
I watched Him preach beside the Lake, that lay
Quiet and cool, close to the great highway.
Soon I began to jot down what I heard,
Brother, upon this scroll; so much I feared
I might forget one sentence, nay, one word.
There came a day when Jesus preached in church,
I touched His arm, as He passed down the porch;
He smiled, and did not wipe away the smirch.
To my dark toll-desk I returned to wait
Jesus' returning there, or soon or late;
A poor worm, till I saw Him pass the gate.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Yes, Simon, I recall that eve you came:
The sun just set, earth and sky still aflame;
As you passed by He smiled and spoke my name.
He did not bid me follow Him just then;
Yet I could never let Him go again,
So closed the gate, took up my scroll and pen,
Kept them in sight for hours till they were come
Circled by welcoming cries to Simon's home,
Boldly I followed them within the room.
Even as I came, the roof gaped overhead:
Down slid Manasseh slowly, on his bed
Slung by the sides, a dying man, you had said;
His friends leaned over from the broken roof,
And begged our Lord to heal, on his behoof
Who bore in palsied flesh sin's fatal proof.
Ah, though my flesh gave no betraying sign,
Lay there 'twixt guilt and guilt a boundary line?
We were old friends, and all his sins were mine.
The crowded room, the hustling to and fro
Swooned out of time and space, and Love bent low
From heaven, and Love to heaven from earth did go.
Through my dimmed eyes I saw Manasseh's tears;
We knew Love looked upon our wasted years,
And shared the shame of both ill-spent careers.
Through my dimmed eyes I saw the Master's face
All courteous pity and courageous grace:
Life poured from that clear look on us apace.

"You have hurt God, but dry your tears,
Lad; I forgive those finished years.
Begin again: there's no arrears!"

O dreamer, waken! From what realms unknown
Is that strange utterance to us-ward blown?
Who can forgive our sin save God alone?

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Have we sinned toward Thee, Thou joyful Youth?
We have hurt God; have we hurt Thee forsooth?
And yet . . . our hearts declare Thou dost speak truth.
Thou, Thou alone, hast dwelled within God's heart,
Thou, sinless, borne with Him a filial part
In all His shame, in all His bitter smart.
So, having suffered sin in God's own mind,
Thou hast the right, yea, the desire to unbind
Our bands. Thus did my thoughts to worship wind.
I question if He to Himself were good;
He seemed to give that grace like daily food
Passed on from hand to hand, as brothers should.
And if He sat nearest His Father's place,
And gave straight from God's hand this gift of grace,
There was no pride written upon His face.

Only He gravely turned and said
To those grim scribes beside the bed,
"Why have you such uneasy minds?
God's pardon, which I bear, unbinds
Spirit, no less than body. (Lad,
Rise up now, take home your bed.)"

Next day, as Jesus passed out toward the sea,
He paused beside my desk expectantly;
His face was bright: He whispered, "Follow me!"
And so my life began. Sweethearts at play
Ask, "What did we to pass the time away
Before we loved? We were not born!" they say.
Thus on that day, I bade my waking soul
Good-morrow, and I closed the place of toll;
And rose and followed Him who makes me whole.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

I planned a feast of welcome and farewell,
Where I might gather all my friends, and tell
My good news, and rejoice with them a spell,
And stand by Jesus' side in open day;
Some friends might follow with me, in His way;
When they heard Him, how could they say Him nay?
To this great feast all my old comrades came—
Excisemen, soldiers, women of ill-fame,
Creatures of small repute, souls blind, halt, lame.
But as we sat beneath my lemon trees
Feasting with Jesus, happy as you please,
There stole in five important Pharisees,
And said to Simon here, "What does this mean?
Your Master dines with folk that are unclean!
In such a place no good man would be seen."

Simon was angry, and grew red,
But Jesus turned to them and said:
"Those who are well and strong like you
Need no doctor; sick men do.
I came not to call just men,
But sinners to return again
To God. If you were as happy to-day
As we are, you would not say
It is strange to feast and rejoice this way.
Take heed that you do not despise
These little ones: their angels' eyes,
I tell you, look upon God's face
Always, within His secret place.
Yea, the Son of man is come
To lead these little lost ones home.

I knew a shepherd near Sepphoris
Had a hundred sheep of his own, no less:
I met him one day when I was a boy,
He was empty of meat, but full of joy,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

For he had found a wether, strayed
Over the rocks by himself; and he said
He had searched in the mist a night and a day,
For this one wether gone astray.
And always since then when things get strayed,
When even a shilling is mislaid,
And folk begin to search and sweep,—
I see that shepherd with his sheep:
I see him call the neighbors in
Round his hearth-fire, and begin
To rejoice with them, and they with their host;
Because he had found the sheep that was lost.
I hear my mother's happy voice
When she found her lost coin: 'Rejoice,'
She cried to all the neighbors round:
'That shilling that I lost is found!'

Is not a sheep worth more than a shilling?
A soul worth far more than a sheep?
And God your Father far more willing,
Than even that shepherd was, to keep
His flock entire?"

And then the Master told
A story to be cut in words of gold
On silver tablets: I were far too bold
To tell it now. Not of lost coins, lost sheep,
But a lost son, a father's love so deep
And so divine, that we who heard did leap
Closer to God's heart than I thought we might
In this cold world.

Later, that selfsame night
Came some of John's disciples seeking light
Concerning fasting, for the Fast was due.
"Master," they said, "pray tell us why do You

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Feast thus to-night?" Quoth He

"I tell you true

"The bridegroom's friends will never fast

Till the festive rites are past;

Soon enough will come the day

To fast . . . when he is gone away . . .

Taken from them . . .

But you—no wonder

If your minds are torn in sunder:

The fragile robes of faith outworn,

Patched with new cloth, the worse are torn:

Ancient wine-skins burst and spill

Fresh wine. It is best to fill

New skins with new wine. Yet, indeed,

It's no child's work to change your creed:

Lips that have tasted mellow wine

Never call the new-drawn fine;

And if your fasting can reveal

A Realm these veils of flesh conceal;

Then fast. For full in sight of men

I stand, and yet I am not seen;

Therefore My soul is grieving over

The sons of men, since I discover

All drunken, yet not one I find

Athirst, all having eyes, yet blind.

But when you fast don't pull long faces,

And stand about in public places.

Hypocrites do so to gain

The praise of men, and not in vain.

You, when you fast, anoint your head,

And wash your body, then instead

Of man to marvel or approve,

Behold unveiled your Father's love!

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Nor must you ape the hypocrites
Who flourish trumpets in the streets
When they give alms, tho' what they gain
Is what they sought, the praise of men.
Nay, do not let your right hand guess
What your left doth, and then in place
Of man to marvel or approve,
Behold unveiled your Father's love!

And when you pray don't imitate
These hypocrites who stand in state
Praying in church or street, they gain
The thing they sought, the praise of men.
Nay, go into your room before
You kneel to pray, and close the door,
For with God's eyes you have to do;
He sees in secret, judges true.
Man will not see you, nor approve,
But there God will unveil His love.

Which of you shall have a friend,
And go and say at midnight, 'Friend,
Have you three loaves that you can lend
To me, because a friend of mine
Upon a journey, fain would dine
Here with me now, and I have naught
To set before him?' If you sought
Your friend on such an errand, he
Might answer, 'Do not trouble me,
The door is shut, the household lies
Safely abed, I cannot rise.'
And yet I say though friendship fail
Sheer persistence will prevail.
What you ask is given you:
What you desire does come true:

THE GALILEAN DAYS

What you seek with all your mind,
You will sometime surely find.
He who asks of God a dole
Doth thereby enrich his soul.
Your spirit never goes on quest,
And homeward turns again unblest.
When did you ever see a father
Whose boy asked bread, say, Take this rather,
And thrust into his hand—a stone;
Or put him off with a bare bone,
When he passed in his plate for meat?
Even a bad father could not cheat
His child, nor will the All-wise, the All-good
Deny our hungering spirits food.

And if sometimes, when silently
You kneel alone, you think that He
Does not hear, or does not care,
Do not lose heart: He still is there.
Do not think the God behind
The illusive curtain of your mind
Is all you have for Father . . . Yet
Since you believe He might forget
His children, you will have to pray
Till that curtain fades away;
For even as Pity broods behind
The fiercest mask of humankind,
Behind your dreams of God most dread
A Father yearns, with hands outspread.
You do not ask your dog to sup
From a consecrated cup;
Nor cast a string of pearls before
The swine and garbage by the door.
And men, like beasts, are never given
The things for which they have not striven:
I think I never will forget

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

A fierce old judge in Nazaret;
I used to watch him walk abroad
Railing against man and God.
A widow I knew well in town
Again and yet again came down
To his courtroom, and cried, 'Prithee,
Avenge me of mine enemy.'
For a time he would not hear:
Then said, 'Altho' I have no fear
Of man, or God, I'll see her through,
Or else she'll beat me black and blue.'
His speech was ruder than his heart:
He heard her cry and took her part.
Yes—men are better than they seem,
And God far kinder than you deem."

Here Jesus' eyes fell on the Pharisees,
Gentle with hopes that whispered: "Even these
Were they but tended, might be goodly trees!"
Alas, blind exiles from a happier place
Than that you close against the Master's face,
Think you *Him* outcast, *you*—the sons of grace?
Well, call Him outcast: always He goes drest
In humble garb, and takes us lowliest
And lost for His companions. You have guessed
No depths so deep as those He trod, before
I found Him standing knocking at my door:
Only great love may such great deeps explore!

.

Two days after my feast, on Sabbath morn
Jesus was walking through the fields of corn
That sweep the base of Hattin's Western Horn.
And His disciples plucked the ears, and ate.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

"Shame!" cried some passing Pharisees, ill-met,
"This is the Sabbath: dare the fools forget!"

But Jesus turned to them, and said,
"Here beneath the dome of heaven
My friends, like David's, are forgiven;
Never priest or worshiper
In spirit and in truth did fare
Up and down sweet Mercy's road,
His feet outside the House of God.
And while in these fair fields of corn
My disciples, hunger torn,
Eat and worship, God is there,
And this becomes the House of Prayer,
And these His priests, and this His bread
With Mercy, not with Judgment spread.
O, there is something more for fear
And trembling, than the Temple here!
But Mercy's ways are past your ken
Therefore you blame guiltless men;
Whom God made lord you make the slave
Of the free gift his Father gave,—
Gave to His own child, to trace
By its sweet use a Father's face.
See yonder reaper in the glade,
Pausing now to whet his blade,
If he with heart and mind at rest
Says 'Here and now I serve God best,'
He keeps the Law; but is he free
Of such heart-singleness, then he
Is cursèd—breaking God's decree."

Jesus Himself goes every Sabbath day
Up to the House of God to sing and pray;
Grief, when she looks on Him, dissolves away.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

I never knew that Sabbath eves were sweet,
Until I spent them at the Master's feet,
Hearing Him softly to His friends repeat
Psalm after psalm, and deep into the night
Talk with us there as you would think God might,
Should He descend from His eternal height,
Should He come down to dwell as man with men . . .
Ah, when those evenings come I drop my pen:
I can but sit listening, listening then.

Brother, toward yonder up-thrust shape you stare,
It is Karn Hattin; even as we fare
Thither, my happy tale is moving there.
For there, soon after we had plucked the corn,
We were ordained beneath the double Horn,
One early, dim-lit, solemn, summer morn.
The night before, Jesus had bid us go
With Him apart. We left the crowds below,
And up those moonlit steeps we mounted slow.
A friend at Ain Arbêla gave us bread
And figs for supper. Soon the feast was spread;
And when the meal was ended, Andrew said:
"There was a time, Master, we used to say
A prayer the Baptist taught us, every day:
Could you give us some simple prayer to say?"
So Jesus taught us then: "*Our Father dear,
Who art in heaven, may we all revere
Thy Name.*" We whispered after: God drew near.
"Then say, *Thy Kingdom come*; for now you know
You seek the realm of God." We murmured low.
"*Thy Kingdom come.*" He said, "It cometh so."
Then He gave us this word: "*Thy Will be done
On earth as now in heaven*; the flame begun
In your own hearts must shine forth like the sun.
And when you kneel never forget to say:

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Father, give us our daily bread to-day.
And having asked that, put all care away.
And next: *Forgive us all the wrongs we do*
To Thee, while we forgive our debtors too."
I heard no voice but John's repeat that through.
"Children, you are tired out," the Master said:
And He leapt up, and, gathering bracken, spread
Old Simon and his son a ferny bed.
And all we others rose likewise, and found
Heather and fern, and spread them on the ground;
But shame it was, not sleep, held speech fast bound—
Shame for our silence, when He bade us say
As we forgive our debtors: sad we lay,
Learning how hard it is to learn to pray.

Then Jesus' voice came: "Ere you sleep,
I give you one more word to keep:
Children, never judge each other,
Let none of you condemn his brother.
The mote within your brother's eye
Causes you such agony
That heedless of your beam, you shout,
'Brother, let me pull that out!'
But while you thus condemn your kind,
You do but prove your own eyes blind.
If love your blindness had removed,
Instead of judging, you had loved!
Men mete for you with your own measure:
Judge—steal from man his dearest treasure,
His name—you have yourself bereft.
You are the poorer for the theft.
He who clouds his brother's spirit
Gains neither love nor any merit.
But give, and men will give to you
From hearts far richer than you knew.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

They will take the love you give,
And cherish it, and it will live
And grow, until it is a flame
To warm the heart from whence it came.
Good-night, lads, pray God to keep
Your steps from pathways over-steep,
To keep your souls from dark distress
With Satan, in the wilderness."

The Master left us then, and climbed alone
Far up fantastic streets of basalt stone,
Silver and black beneath the sinking moon.
Long hours alone He tarried there, while we
Lay brooding, dozing, searching fitfully
For dawnlight on the faint deep-hollowed sea . . .
Distress and darkness! When will night be gone?
Gloom over Naphtali and Zebulon! . . .
Then in the darkest hour a great light shone!
No earthly light: long ere the desert skies
Took faintest rose, or flung their pearly dyes
O'er the gray Lake, long, long before sunrise,
Jesus came down from those high streets of prayer.
We twelve souls, wrapped in darkness, felt the air
Quiver with light, and looked, and He was there!

And then our Master did us Twelve ordain
To follow earthly loss, and heavenly gain,
Lifelong to labor for the heavenly Reign.
Two by two, kneeling in the sharpening shade
Flung by yon height that towers above the glade,
Our apostolic vows we Twelve men made.
Simon and Andrew first: Simon, least shy
Of all, made his vows very valiantly,
Cheering his brother, who was fain to cry.
For Andrew has a sweetheart down in Nain,
And wondered then if these must love in vain

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Sweetheart or wife, who go to preach the Reign.
Peter had no such fears. "I could not love"
(He told me once) "the Master, did He move
My heart one hair's breadth from its chosen dove."

Then aureole-wise the adoring sunbeams shone
Upon the bended, gold-bright head of John,
Of all our band goodliest, dearest one.
Beside him kneeled his brother James; they two
Are cousins of our Master. But you knew
These things from John, who told his tale to you.
Next, that strange couple came, from Kerioth town,
Simon, whose old rebellions, overblown,
Tarry, green fruits, on a disastrous sun.
There followed Philip, with Nathanael,
And then my brother, nicknamed James the Small,
And his son, called Lebbæus; and these were all,
Save Thomas, here, and me; we kneeled beside
Our Leader, and upon the Father cried
For grace to preach His Kingdom till we died.
Simon the Zealot, sitting near by me,
Said, when we rose, "Lord, do You think that we
Might choose a title for our company?"
"There is one name," said Jesus then,
"You may now receive from men:
Not *teachers*, one alone may be
Your Teacher, and all brethren ye;
Nor *masters*, nay, but *servants* be.
Who serves the most, the best is he;
Exalt thyself, thou art brought down:
Abase thyself, and wear a crown."

Beneath the Horns a level meadow lies
Strewn with great stones; from thence, after sunrise
We marked dawn's pageant fading from the skies.
But O the deepening glory of that Land

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Within, safe-walled from change, where hand in hand
With Jesus, wended now our pilgrim band.

Meanwhile the crowd had gathered, and sat round
Like eager scholars, on the stony ground,
Row behind row, expectant; and there wound
Still up the dewy path, a vivid coil
Of color, men and women of the soil,
To hear Him first, and then away to toil.

"Brothers, let us think again
Of the heavenly citizen:
How must he live who goes abroad
Burgess of the City of God?

Happy, happy, happy ye
If your spirit, lowly, see
First, her own great penury.
She will find already given
A wide-flung door to enter heaven.
Mourns she then with humble dread?
She will soon be comforted:
Meek and fearful goes she still?
Soon in every field and hill
She will find unveiled the grace
And glory of her Father's face:
Knowing then her nakedness
She yearns to make herself a dress—
Yearns to be clothed with righteousness:
Pity and Mercy then come down,
Teach her how to weave her gown:
Showing others mercy, she
Finds mercy round her like a sea:
Purged of sin's last blinding trace,
Gazes full upon God's face.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Now she will be called His child,
Share His work, forth in the wild
Where men and nations never cease
From planning war, she will plan peace:
Down the dark ways of earthly loss,
Conquer her kingdom by her cross.
Once a penurious citizen,
Now, worthy with her Lord to reign.

Sing from morning light till even,
Great is your reward in heaven:
Count not life of little worth,
You are sent to salt the earth;
Salt, you make a wholesome race,
Savorless, a barren place.
Lit, your lamp will light mankind,
Quenched, you leave the nations blind;
Nay your lamp is kindled now,
Lit to lighten, all allow;
Hang it up on high till men
See by that light, the heavenly Reign,
See it transmute the laws of old
From rods of iron to shafts of gold.
Take that dark Rabbinic saying
About retorting and repaying,
'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth,'
Grim words that used to vex my youth,
Till musing long, at last I saw
Vengeance a universal law:
But how did men retaliate?
Hitherto by barren hate:
Spirit and not law, must change,
Love must wreak her own revenge,
Thus, if a man in anger smites
Your cheek, or claims beyond his rights,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Let him smite you, as before,
Still give him all he asks, and more;
If someone claims your coat for his,
Say, Take it, friend, and this, and this;
And if a Roman forces you
To bear his spear one mile, go two;
With gold reproach the beggar's groans,
And him who borrows, with free loans.
Yea, gems of pity hidden lie
In tooth for tooth and eye for eye.

Too often, when the Law was given
To point men on from earth to heaven;
Backward and downward they have gone
Instead of holding up and on.
To *Love your neighbor*, which was meant
To give self-love an outward bent,
They tagged on *Hate your enemy*,
And made a mock of God's decree.
Now learn this mandate otherwise,
And know that whosoever tries
To love his neighbor, must go on
To love all men beneath the sun.
Did ever God your Father say,
Behold, I hate my enemy?
Could God say that, Whose sunbeams pour
Through the robber's open door?
Could God say that, Whose fruitful showers
Refresh the tyrant's plot of flowers?
The hurt you have received from men
Render not to them again:
The good you would receive from all,
Render with joy to great and small.
You must go back and learn once more
Love's wings have just begun to soar

THE GALILEAN DAYS

When you but love those kind to you.
O My children, keep in view
The Pattern sent you from above—
God's perfect, all-enfolding Love!"

*The heavens declare the glory of the Lord:
His Word is graven on the wild green sward:*
O shattering glory! O divinest Word!
Joy-drunken, before unveiled heaven we stood, "
Just and unjust, the evil and the good;
Sunlight and wind our sacramental food.
Think, brother, think! He might so well have showed,
As perfect symbol of the love of God,
Himself, *His* love, but nay, He turned abroad,
Most God-like while most meek, proving His case
From pages where our eyes could dimlier trace
God's love, than on the page of His dear face.
But how could we poor creatures imitate
Such dreadful love, we, far more skilled in hate
Than love, at Love's high court arrived so late!
Ah me, so late! Yet timely to receive
This vast gift, and receiving, to believe
That till we love like Him, His love must grieve.

.
Thomas, will you take up the tale anon?
You saw Him heal the army-captain's son;
My heart's not weary, but my voice is done.

THE DOUBTER

I fear I am not fit to tell the story:
Too much perplexed am I, too hedged about
With paralyzing phantasms of doubt;

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

For me, long since, life's pageant lost its glory:
I am a kill-joy at the wedding feast,
A slow and sullen beast.

Yet for a while, since Levi here is weary,
I will take up the tale. And O, believe
That I too love the Master, though I weave
A tapestry whose tones are sometimes dreary . . .
There is a cloud, I cannot chase away,
Broods over this brief day.

From far Damascus, down the *Via Maris*
The caravans come burdened with the breath
Of grand old Faiths, far older than our Faith.
And where, beside the well, the traveler tarries,
This lonely pilgrim tarries too and hears
Many strange hopes and fears.

Yet hardly strange to me, for they come waking
Faint sister-dreamings in my own heart's keep,
Things I knew once, that passed away in sleep;
Till this new following seems almost forsaking;
And round this simple life there chafe and fret
Wild thoughts I must forget. . . .

Enough! I dare no longer thrust the shadow
Of these gray questionings between your face
And these fair scenes you are so fain to trace.—
We bade farewell to that most sacred meadow
And made for the Lake side, and soon were come
Into Capernaum.

Last year our Roman toll-guard captain builded
A synagogue, and times he is advised
To worship there, may yet be circumcised.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

And fawning round him, doling out their gilded
Obsequious phrases, anxious elders wait
His pleasure, at the gate.

Now it transpired, last Sabbath Day, when walking
Out of God's house, this Pagan joined a pair
Of Pharisees, his eyes were set astare,
From muttering, he fell to feverish talking,
His son was ill, lay panting on his bed,
Even now, maybe, was dead.

What of that extraordinary creature,
That Prophet, was He present? He might heal . . .
"Not here," they said, but vouched with lukewarm
zeal,
To find Him; found Him; spoke: "Now look here,
Teacher,
You'd better go: he built our synagogue."
Then turned as from a dog.

Without a word He went. His cheeks were
burning,
Yet Pity lashed Him forward until—see!
A Roman courier: "Do not come to me,"
The Captain says, "of late I have been learning
It is not meet that such as Thou should'st come
To my unworthy home.

Nor dare I come to Thee! Say one word only,
So heal my son. For in the hosts of Rome
I bid one soldier go, another come.
And so they go and come. Nor dost Thou lonely
Great Captain, stand! O speed Thine angels now
To cool my child's hot brow."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Said Jesus, "I have not found yet
In Israel, faith like this: forget,
Forget thy grief, forget to mourn.
The lad is healed, return, return!
From East and West dark alien faces
In endless bright procession come
And find God's Kingdom is their home,
And with the patriarchs take their places,
While the children of the King
Stand outside, coldly lingering.
O wonder, Israel, to see
Faith so sublime, yet not in thee!"

We went to Jesus' house then, but the rumor
That He was home brought hundreds up the street,
And there they clamored, while we sat at meat.
He would not eat: His mother, out of humor,
Upbraided Him, but with no word of blame
He went outside to them.

We followed. Afterwards I saw His mother
Press up the road, a pale, bent, anxious thing.
Jesus seemed not to see her, and lingering
On the crowd's edge, along with James, His brother,
And Simeon, she stood. A Pharisee
Talked with them cunningly.

Meanwhile a poor dumb creature stood grimacing
In front of Jesus, till He laid His hands
On the small head . . . Entranced the poor lad
stands

About the space of half a minute, facing
The Master. Then an awestruck *Thank you* slips
From his enfranchised lips.

THE GALILEAN DAYS .

The fire is kindled! Hark how the crowd is crying,
"See what a mighty deed Jesus has done:
The dumb man speaks. This must be David's son."
Hark to the Scribes with sneering words replying:
"Beelzeboul! In the prince of darkness' name
This evil sorcerer came."

Then rose like tongues of flame the words of Jesus:

"Self-division leaves the state,
Leaves the city, desolate.
So, if Satan rise and call
Satan forth, his kingdoms fall.
But what if God cast Satan forth?
Then the Kingdom comes on earth.
Everyone who slanders Me
Finds forgiveness readily;
But woe to such as close their eyes
To Holy Spirit's energies,
Calling the power to calm a sick
And tortured soul a devil's trick:
They blaspheme against the light,
Call white black, and call black white,
Take for good eternal evil
Who dare to call their God a devil.
They bar God's grace from entering in
To cure their everlasting sin."

Here Jesus' brother interrupted, crying,

"Come home! come home! Your mother's heart will
break!

Madman, You might be silent for her sake,
If nothing else can still you; she is dying
Of shame and sorrow; come, at least and show
Some pity ere she go."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Mary uttered a cry, and Jesus, turning,
Whispered, or sobbed, one sacred answering word.—
In this harsh world, is't likely that she heard?—
The crowd took sides; and speechless now, and burning
With sick vicarious shame, our Master stood
Motionless as a rood. . . .

Then one of Israel's comfortable mothers,
Standing close by Him, spoke full tenderly:
"Happy the mother of such a son as Thee!"
"Happier," He sighed, "happier are those others
Who hear the Word of God; happiest they
Who hearken and obey."

We wept for Him. But lo, the light of morning
The light that we had seen five hours ago,
Once more broke thro' those midnight clouds and
shone
Beneath His brows; once more to us Twelve turning,
And swiftly thrusting out His hands, He drew
Our hearts to Him anew.

"Behold," He said, "here are henceforth
My only kith and kin on earth.
Who does God's will becomes My brother,
Becomes My sister, and—My mother.
Let every man heed what he hears,
Treasure enters well-tuned ears,
Careless ears make idle tongue;
Idle words work bitter wrong,
Careless judgments have to pay
A fearful price on judgment day."

So He disowned them. O bitter, bitter blindness!
Never blind mother lost so great a son!
O double pity, double knot undone!

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Never did son so lack sweet mother's kindness
As Jesus lacks her over-arching face
And her long-lost embrace!

Perhaps the Pharisee I had seen haranguing
His mother, had whispered evil in her ears
Concerning Jesus, tricking her with fears—
Mad youths like Him were likely stuff for hanging,
It was too perilous for such to roam,
James ought to get Him home.

Perhaps he whispered that strange god's name to her,
Urging her, by her sacred faith, to strive
To bring Him back, and save His soul alive. . . .
All this is surmise, but I am very sure
She loves Him still; and once while He slept I came
To Him, and heard her name.

A crowd accosted Him next day, "O Teacher."
A Scribe began, "some sign would prove you sage."

"An evil and disloyal age,"
Said Jesus, "ever craves a sign.
A sign? Yea, when you see the Preacher
Of Nineveh in Realms divine,
With all the souls who heard his word
And repented while they heard.
A sign? When he leans down to say
'You heard a greater Word than they!'
A sign? Yes, when fair Sheba's Queen
On Judgment Day, in glorious sheen,
Looks in your eyes, 'I came from far
To hear the words of Solomon.
How far went ye, how far, how far,
To hearken to a Greater One?'"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

For that old demon John expelled
From Judah, left where once it dwelled
Only a swept and garnished room.
Empty ye are, and cold, become;
You stooped indeed in Jordan's flood
Beneath the prophet's cleansing rod;
With tears and smiles that festal day
You put your evil past away.
But now that exile demon roaming
Finds the house from whence it came.
Nought within to hinder homing,
Home he comes, a sevenfold flame.
Still, at one sign, he might depart—
The sign of a repentant heart."

Two lads approached me one day, shy and sickly:
"We are from Machærus, where the prophet John
Our master lies, forgetful of the sun,
In a foul dungeon: 'Go,' he said, 'go quickly
To Galilee, find Jesus, bring me word,
When you have seen and heard.'"

I led the pair to Jesus, and they gave Him
The imprisoned Baptist's question, *Art Thou He
That cometh?* he bade us say, *or else must we
Look for Another?* Lord, say Yea, and save him
From sorrow at the last! Say Yea! Say Yea!
He soon must pass away.

Jesus did but darkly say,
"Go back to John without delay;
Tell him the things you hear and see
Upon the shores of Galilee:
Tell him you saw an highway there
Where any simple fool might fare.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

No lion nor ravening she-wolf's wrath,
Say plain to John, can find that Path,
But there the ransomed captive goes,
Forgetting all his former woes,
And there the Lord's redeemed return,
Never, never more to mourn.
And blest, He whispered, blest is he
Who shall not find offense in Me."

Slow past the tollgate John's disciples wander,
Reluctant-footed, toward those towers of fear,
Murmuring the Master's message of good cheer;
I wonder if the prophet over yonder
Will find God's Kingdom in that tender speech,
Come down within his reach.

Scarce are they gone, when, speaking from the prow
Of Simon's boat, our Master cries,

"Come now,

What did you go out to see
In the wilderness? Tell Me!
A reed shaken by the wind?
Or what did you go out to find?
One in rich apparel? Nay,
These in royal houses stay.
Come, did you not go out to see
A prophet? Yea, more, verily.
John was the preacher of the word
Leveling pathways for his Lord.
Yet, though you would not weep with him
Whose eyes with many tears were dim,
Though you will not rejoice to see
The Kingdom, nor exult with Me,
My laughter and his tears shine down
Through time, twin gems in Wisdom's crown.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

See, the Sowers forth to sow!
Laden, down the lane they go;
Grain falls here on hard trod ground,
Quick by hungry birds is found;
Other seeds from shallow earth
Leap into untimely birth,
Rootless, thirsty: scorching day
Soon must wither these away;
Other seeds from thorny beds
Strive awhile to lift their heads,
Thorns, alas, have soon arisen,
Strangling their pale blades in prison;
Sometimes from the Sower's hand
Seeds alight on fertile land,
Deeply root and proudly hold
Thirty, sixty, hundredfold."

Above the golden beach spreads many a meadow
Of upturned land, and there the sowers go
In scarlet tunics; right and left they sow
The barley-corn, made for us now the shadow,
Or semblance, of the living Word of God,
Sown by His sons abroad.

Would we be sowers too, He said while going
Homeward that night beneath the new-sown hill,
Would we go forth at morning? Would we fill
Bags that no man could see with seed for sowing
On fields unseen? To-morrow would we go
Like John, like Him, and sow?

Since two days gone it seemed as if our Master
Had other dreams than those He had before,
When first He preached good news on yonder shore—

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Dreams of a Kingdom, nay, of something vaster—
The Messianic dream, blossoming now
At last upon His brow.

Oh yes, He knows my fears, for when He sent us
At sunrise forth by twos, I found my mate
Was Matthew here, whose confidence is great
As mine is small. Our Master plainly meant us
To temper each the other. What befel
Proves how He paired us well.

He gave us queer instructions. I, unmated,
Could not have kept them. Yet I think I see
Behind them all, a deep philosophy;
Never for carnal care must be abated
Even for one hour the struggle of the soul
Toward her appointed goal.

He bade us go in faith: no change of raiment
Nor shoes; no bag, no staff; and all the gold
We took on pilgrimage—the News we told,
And the sweet hope our hearers might make payment
With kindness, for the Good News we had brought,
The healing we had wrought.

There is a haunting word He used that morning,
While we were gathering round to say farewell:
The lost sheep of the House of Israel,
Go not beyond them. With what tender yearning
His being yearned toward them, when He spoke
Of His own country-folk.

Yet, though He bade us keep within our borders,
Like mushrooms in the darkness, even here
From every dung-heap enemies appear:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

There is some crisis on us; parting orders
From Jesus showed it: "Make it your one cry,
The Kingdom of heaven is nigh."

We two went first to Haifa, beholding
The ships of Tarshish riding on the deeps;
There is the promise of the isles; there sleeps
Leviathan unbeheld. The moon was folding
Her cheek on ocean's, when the harbor drew
At dawning, into view.

The sound of silver trumpets three times blowing
Athwart the dawn, greeted us at the gate;
We entered trembling. Would they tolerate
Our Good News? They laughed at us; and so going
Forth from the place, we shook our sandals free
Of dust, by His decree.

Elsewhere they heard us kindlier: Matthew's story
Put all I said in shadow: broken men
And hopeless women talked and smiled again,
Timidly first, till grace bloomed into glory,
And whole towns sang to God: then we would stay
Awhile, and teach the way.

For even my sad lips took fire, and tiring
The stars with talking, down their streets went we,
And every door stood open hospitably,
And forth from every house they came, inquiring
Anent the Kingdom of God—good ground indeed
Were those, for heavenly seed.

Enough! there is a silver tongue beside us
Can tell in sweeter tones than mine, her tale
Of new-born joy. She seemeth shy and frail,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

But I have heard her saying, "Woe betide us
If we keep silence, nor declare His Word
Who is our Love, and Lord!"

MARY OF BETHANY'S STORY

I

My mother must have been as young
As Jesus when she died.
Dim memories I have: among
Larkspurs, that April's finger flung
On Olivet, she stood: I clung
About her knees, and cried.
For in her eyes a fear was set,
And ah, her pale, pale cheeks were wet
With tears, and sore she sighed.

Then came a breathless summer night;
We huddled on the house top; white
And mournful lay she there.
A thousand, thousand stars shone bright
Above, and from those realms of light
A flashing seraphim took flight,
And clove the inky air.

His name was Death, and while we heard
Her whisper fainting word on word
Of wistfulest farewell,
Death softly did unbody her;
Lazarus says he heard the stir
Of wings that mounted through the air,
And says he heard a bell
Ring somewhere far among the skies,
Far, far, and faint, but chiming-wise,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And says he heard the swell
Of singing voices sudden rise
And fall again as if a door
Had swung ajar; or like the roar
Of one long wave upon the shore,
That slowly rose and fell.

Next day I found her cold and pale:
I laid white roses on her veil:
How still her form, how thin, and frail
With toil and sickness! One did wail
Beside her bier, but there—
So thin they were, so young, so sweet—
I wept in silence on her feet;
The mourners frowned: "*Ah, most unmeet!
Shed thy tears elsewhere,
Weep not upon thy mother's feet!*"
And, sobbing still, I swift unwound
The band wherewith my head was bound,
And wiped them with my hair.

II

And yet she was not dead to me:
I had her spirit's company,
I had her tender care.
Beside the well we soft would play
On many a quiet summer day.
And where Mukelik's waters stray
Toward the plain, we took our way,
Through fern of maidenhair.
My childish feet were ever fain
To linger in that emerald lane,
Where even Grief grew fair;
Where something met my soul, as though
My mother's ghost did softly go
Athwart the woodland air;

THE GALILEAN DAYS

And when the silent moonflowers shook
Their little faces toward the brook,
It hardly needed I should look
To see her smiling there.

The while I wandered, I would brood
Of love, and tender motherhood,
And dream I was a bride.
And all those dreams were heaven to me,
And fair my mother's face to see
There, by my father's side:
For there they walked the heavenly ways,
As they had walked in far-off days
On earth, before he died.
And in my childish vision, he
Was like to God as like can be,
And yet to God he cried,
He cried to God our Father kind,
To keep their little ones in mind;
Amen, my mother sighed. . . .

.

III

He rode in Herod's courtier train,
And by our wells the camels fain
Would rest for one brief hour,
Before they faced the tiresome climb
To the Asmonean palace. Prime
On Olivet about that time
Blossoms a certain flower.
I sought its azure petals there,
And sudden met his burning stare:
"Amid the flowers, a bud most fair,"
He sighed, "an ivory tower,
All fair within, awaiting one

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

To be its bright awakening sun:
Ah, Jove! had *I* the power."

Arrayed was he in bright attire;
Tall, comely; eyes and lips afire;
Till then, I had not seen Desire
On any face ablaze.
Tiberias was his native town:
He had a palace all his own,
And lived there lonely and alone—
I listened in amaze.
The sky took on a leaden tone
That eve, when he had ridden on
Beyond my following gaze.

IV

Two summer eves had hardly gone,
When he returned again alone;
And smiled again on me.
I blushed, with downcast eyes, and smiled;
He said I was a lovely child,
And said he liked to wander wild
By the Tiberian sea;
But better still he liked to roam
Where the wild cherry blossoms foam
In woods of Bethany.—
With his soft hand he smoothed my hair,
Said it was silkier and more fair
Than any in Galilee.

And so at length bright flame did dart
From the cold altar of my heart.
O, ere the kindling hand depart,
What might I sacrifice?
Would I not like, he asked, to find
My dreams come true? His eyes seemed kind.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

He spoke of Love: his love would bind
Bright gems above my eyes;
Would bind my arms with jewels rare,
And set such rubies in my hair
As queens might not despise.

But Martha with her pitcher came,
And named me many a bitter name,
While home we hasted fast.
And when we were at supper set,
She called me "wanton"; and I met
My brother's eyes; O, to forget
The dreadful look that smites me yet
Though long his rage is past.

It seemed as if that word, that look
Came like a desert blast, and shook
The walls of home, yon day,
Within whose shelter no harsh word
Had ever, until now, been heard.
No harsh look found a way;—
Had shook the walls, until they fell,
And turned our heaven into hell.
The rest will not take long to tell:
A strange light beckoned from the well—
Beckoned, and—led astray.

V

Next eve, the wild flowers on the hill,
Which used to smile, were cold and still.
My mother's face was gone;
Nor was her low voice more to hear
Beside the brook that babbled clear,
Nor was her tender presence near.
Yet I was not alone.
And soon the shamefast mist arose,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And seemed to sigh, "My curtain blows
About the hillside; no one knows."
O kindly mists, ye cannot close
About a deed that's done.

Gaily caparisoned, next day,
The cavalcade clattered away.
I followed half a mile.
I saw them, swift receding, go
Along the road to Jericho,
Adown the deep defile;
I saw him lightly wave his hand:
My eyes were burning like a brand,
My mouth was like the desert sand,
To see him turn and smile.

When calm night came, I dressed the hair
With myrrh, that he had called so fair,
My throat with beads I strung:
Donned all my childish ornaments,
And soaked my sash with fragrant scents,
And wept to look so young.
I parceled up some figs and bread,
And stole away with stealthy tread,
While Martha moaned, and turned her head
And clutched the cover of the bed,
In sleep, with arms out-flung.

I lingered but one moment more,
Or ere I slid out past the door,
Fingering wistfully
The alabastron of sweet nard
He gave to me to hold and guard
Till I his queen might be.
And then I rolled it in a gown,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

And hid it carefully deep down
Where none were like to see.

VI

I trudged the long deep Ghôr, beneath
The fierce and dreadful sun.
The very breezes held their breath;
The desert seemed in league with death;
And when the day was done
The pitchy air grew full of cries,
And pattering feet, and peering eyes;
And many an horrible surmise
Made terror in my soul to rise;
I stumbled on and on,
My flimsy sandals were outworn;
My Sabbath robe all stained and torn.
And when at last I won
The royal city gates, I fell
Half-fainting by the Golden Well,
And pity found of none.

I sought him out; he passed me by.
O, but his eyes were cold.
And on the street full many an eye
Leered in upon my agony,
Till torture made me bold.
And brazenly I laughed again,
And, laughing, learned the ways of men,
How Innocence might go for gain,
And Beauty might be sold.

VII

Magdala's butterfly! Ah me,
There, in that town of sin,
Life gave brief draughts of ecstasy,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

But all was bitter as the sea,
And bleak and bare within.

I praise God best, exposing most
The things I most would hide;
Shame would conceal, love will reveal
What but for love had died.

One day, while in a childish whim
I strayed along *el Hamam's* brim
Plucking anemones,
A kindly customs-man came by.
Perhaps he marked the tear course dry
Upon my cheek, perhaps a sigh
Was borne upon the breeze;
He stayed to speak a friendly word,
And in my heart it sang, like bird
Of spring in barren trees.

And often, after that, I'd come
For respite to this outcast's home,
And find the respite good;
Beside Capernaum's Western gate
An hour's walk from the house where late
I lived, his villa stood.
His name was Levi; see him go
Before us there with Jude!
He was *God's Gift* to me, and so
"Matthew" becomes him. You may know
About his farewell feast; but O,
'Twas more than earthly food;
For all his hospitality
That happy night became for me
The roomy heart of God.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

VIII

Jesus was there! Our Master! Far
Beyond all dreams was He,
As stars beyond the desert are,
Or worlds beyond the sea.
Like folk entranced, we sat and heard
Him utter magic word on word:
Hour-long we sat, and never stirred,
A blessed company.
And when our Lord, in ringing tones,
Defended us poor outcast ones
With splendid charity
And while He told His tender tale
Of the lost sheep (I know it well:
He told that tale for me)
What wild relief of tears gushed forth,
Tears of deep joy, and holy mirth;
And then He smiled on me:
He smiled on me, as if to say,
"I know it all, and now to-day
All is forgiven thee."

IX

He sent this dear Salome soon,
And O, she was the sweetest boon
Poor sinner ever knew;
She comforted and mothered me;
She was a page where I could see
His grace and glory printed free,
His pity shining through.

She told me of the Gerasene
Who dubbed his mad self "Legion"—clean
Of all his devils. Still, serene,
One single word spoke He:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Shrieking they fled with all the herd
Of frightened swine across the sward,
And hid their vileness from the Lord
In caverns of the sea.—
And I had nourished in my breast
The sevenfold ghoul of Lust for guest,
And often planned to seek my rest
Within that secret sea.
O what, I cried, if He might take
My lusts from me; in that dark Lake
Drown them; and set me free?

X

Of Berenice then she told,
Who many bitter years had doled
To useless doctors all her gold
For healing her distress—
Berenice like to die
At Cæsarea Philippi,
Then trudging to the Lake to try
To touch the Master's dress;
And not in vain! Ah, if I could
But touch His feet in faith, then would
He not forgive, and bless?

She told me, too, of Jair's child:
"*Talitha cum!*" His voice so mild,
So full of thrilling grace,
Had all but said those words to me
In Matthew's courtyard by the Sea
Where first I saw His face.

And while Salome spoke, I crept
Within her loving arms, and wept
Hot penitential tears.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Not dead, but sleeping! Happy doom!
Awake, awake! *Talitha cum!*
Put by ill dreams and fears.
Whose dovelike voice at break of day
Used by my little bed to say
Talitha cum! Talitha cum!
In bygone happy years?

XI

A homesick longing sped my feet,
Nor did I mark the stifling heat,
Nor dread the perils I might meet
In Baca's bitter vale.
That place was now a place of springs;
It almost seemed my feet were wings,
Until I wept at Martha's knee,
And felt her pardoning hand on me,
And told her all my tale.

And later, in the garden shade
Lazarus came to me and said,
"Two days after our dove was fled
Jesus knocked at the door.
A cup of water from the spring
He begged: His quick eyes pitying
Our half-hid grief, begged more;
They begged to share our sorrow's cup;
And so we told Him all; and up
He sprang, and paced the floor.
He said, '*My sandals will be bound
Until your little lamb is found;
My staff bides in My hand,*' He said,
'Until I bring her from the dead';
And vanished down the moor."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

While Lazarus spoke I sat like stone,
So 'stounded I, this Holy One
Had shared our misery.
And O, the cost was not to count
By adding up the full amount
Of leagues men measure by:
But by the countless leagues of shame
His spirit traversed in a flame
Of awful purity.

XII

Now the last lingering mists of doubt
Away did silent roll:
Dreaming, I turned my face about.
And saw myself at Levi's rout
Beside the place of toll.
Dreaming, I heard His voice, and knew
What was the silver cord that drew
From me my very soul.

It was my mother's voice I heard
Within His softly spoken word.
Talitha cum! Mary, my bird,
Awake! At last I knew.
I knew why Jesus' voice that night
Brought back those days of young delight—
Brought Bethany to view,
Where two still prayed within one room,
Talitha cum, Talitha cum!
Dreaming, I listened too,
As I had listened once before
In Matthew's house; it seemed, the door
Of heaven open flew,
And God the heavenly Father's voice
Came floating through: "Rejoice, rejoice.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

My little lamb has made her choice,
And turns to Me anew."
And many a joyful singing note
Joined in from many an angel throat,
And echoed down the blue:
"God keeps for you as sweet a room
As that you had in childhood's home;
Talitha cum! Talitha cum!
Your Father welcomes you."

XIII

Now in my heart it seemed to be
That Jesus' voice was calling me,
From the Tiberian shore:
Mary, arise, and come away;
Nor did my dear ones say me nay.
I tarried now no more;
Save from its hiding place of snow
To take my box of nard and go,
Rejoicing up the Ghôr.

Yea, now I sped with lightsome tread
Up Jordan's vale, erstwhile so dread:
And passed Magdala's gate.
And as I passed, I heard one say,
"Jesus will sup at close of day
With Simon's friends in state."
I hasted on, my heart beat hard;
I pressed it with my box of nard,
"O beating heart, await—
Wait till to-night they sit at meat
In Simon's house (Simon the cheat
Who only asked our Lord to eat
That spies might loiter round His seat)
O beating heart await!—

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

I'll pour my nard upon His head,
More than His body must be fed:
Anoint His head, Jesus, my King!". . .
Nay, who was I
To one so high, so great?

Abashed, I knelt to kiss His feet;
My tears fell fast: it was not meet
That sin-stained hands like mine
Should ever dare anoint His head.
And all in haste ere shame and dread
Should master me, and I be fled,
I loosed my sandal-twine,
I broke the flask of fragrant nard
Above those feet so travel-marred,
And yet so fair and fine;
And while my tears fell down like rain
Amid the fragrance, I was fain
To kiss those feet, again, again,
So sacred and so fair,
And wipe away each travel stain
With my long loosened hair.

XIV

"The Prophet?" Simon murmured low:
"Nay, if he were, he needs must know
What creature this, complaining so
Beside my poor divan."
But Jesus only smiled and said:
"There was a debt and it is paid;
A debt so great, and payment made
So full and free, that unafraid
She pays it back again.
For Love hath taught us to believe
That Love still loveth to receive

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Even as to give: Love doth not grieve
To see those tears' bright rain."
Thus courteously my Savior spoke
Of me, before these stranger folk,
And calmed my timid fears,
That, like poor foolish slaves, had sped,
Seeing His unanointed head,
To anoint His feet with tears.
O recompense beyond all thought,
Jesus received the gift I brought!
And now, as in a dream, I caught
His words athwart their jeers:—

Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace . . .
Ah, no, but His love brought release
To me, who else had died.
Now all my days in peace I go,
According to His word; and lo,
Salome by our side
And yonder twain attend with me
His needs. And with His company
We constantly abide.
And this is all I ask, that I
May follow Him until I die
From morn to eventide;
And when each dusty day is done
May wash His feet at set of sun,
And laugh, where once I cried.

JASPER'S FIRST TALE

So, like sweet ancient music, Mary's tale
Ceased on the soft spring air. As if in dream
I sighed; more like a lifetime did it seem

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Than but one day, since near the clump of oak
I saw that crazy, wolfish crowd of folk
Seethe from the Nazaret gate; and saw His eyes
Kindle with joy amid the anemones.
Once more I gazed on Him and while He raised
His hand before me, smiling, a sun-shaft blazed
Upon my head, charmed by His kingliness
To benediction. O, what sweet distress
Mastered me then? Half-dreaming still, I found
Myself before Him, kneeling on the ground.

WELCOME

Thou Home of every man!
I thank Thee that Thou art still homeless while
There is one swept and garnished heart that can
Stake all upon Thy smile,

Can bid Thee enter there,
And bid good-by to those who went before.
Seeing them at the hidden end of prayer
Within the inmost door.

The rest gained on us, the Master, bending, kissed
The ministering women's hands, while they
Welcomed Him back as those who welcome day
After long darkness. Shyer, yet no less glad
Came His disciples forward, and each one had
Particular greetings given from His Lord.
Peter and John began with one accord
To tell Him of their fright at Nazaret;
And John spoke charming words about a debt
They owed for what I told them. Jesus turned,

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Warm and benign on me His gazes burned
Like April sunbeams, while He welcomed me
With a majestic, grave humility.
But John and Peter were in haste to get
Their Master's own report of Nazaret.
Why had His speech angered His townsfolk so?
And Jesus answered sadly:

“You must know
They challenged Me; said they had heard
How devils fled before My word
Down in Capernaum; ‘Far you roam
To heal,’ they cried; ‘it is at home
Charity begins.’ Then I,
Mindful of Scripture, did reply:
‘In Israel many widows lay
Stricken, in Elijah’s day,
With famine sharp and fell disease;
He was sent to none of these.
Many a pious leper lay
In Israel in Elisha’s day,
But he cleansed the Syrian—
The pagan Syrian Naaman.
Never yet did prophet win
Honor from his own kith and kin.’ ”

We drew nigh Cana, and Nathanael
And Philip came to meet us; we broke bread
There with Nathanael’s mother; but soon were sped
Toward the Tiberian Lake. The highroad led
Along Karn Hattin’s base; and where it bent
Round the last curious spur, a figure leant
Against a date-palm, saw us, sprang like hound
Unleashed; then stood stock still and laughed and
frowned:

“Master,” he said, “the countryside’s aflame.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Crowds are led captive by Thy very Name:
Tarichæa, Kadesha,
Scythopolis and Magdala,
Emmaus,—O wherever Herod's power
Has made the miserable wretches cower,
And curse the ways of Rome, they pant and plain
For Thee, Deliverer. And not in vain,
We well assured them; for we preached the Reign:
We told them He was here—
Told them He would appear
Beside Capernaum's shore
Three Sabbaths hence, no more.
Watch, we cried, the hour is near,
Your Mighty One will soon appear!
We had no time to heal,
Nor did the crowds appeal
To us for healing, but they gaped to hear
A great Deliverer was drawing near. . . ."

So, on and on, the torrent of his speech
Sped feverishly. He cursed when we did reach
Arbêla's ground, where Shalman broke the power
Of Israel long ago; he cursed the hour
That Bacchides, Demetrius' general,
Slew in that same place numbers to appal
The stoutest, sweeping on like fire to take
The Holy City. Fierce did he curse and shake
His skinny fists, while in shrill tones he told
How, like an April snowstorm at noonday,
The Maccabæan armies passed away,
God's Hammer slain; and how the sons of hell
Put forth their heads throughout all Israel.

While Judas decked his tale with curses, Jesus
Shaded His eyes; His close-pressed lips were sealed

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Until we passed Arbêla's battlefield.
Then pointing toward the springing corn that spread
Over the ancient site, He raised His head,
And in a voice of piercing sweetness said:

"Ah, my children, Judas' word
Never on My lips was heard;
Earthly kings may go and come,
Not with these our hope, our home.
Revolution I proclaimed
But a mightier Name I named
Claiming kingship over you,
Than ever Rome or Israel knew.
For My kingdom is within,
Waxing, all unknown, unseen,
First the blade, and then the ear,
Then the full corn in the ear.
Lo! yon green cloak softly spread
Over the ashes of the dead!
So God's Kingdom can advance
Spite of mortal ignorance.
Causes far beyond the ken
Of ignorant or learned men
Work within the secret earth
To bring the blade of corn to birth:
Blindfold, the farmer takes his way,
Sleeping, waking, night and day.
Forces far beyond the mind
Of wise or unwise human kind
Work within the secret soul,
Till at length from part to whole
God's Kingdom, like a harvest field,
In sudden glory stands revealed—
In sudden glory garnered lies
Within the gates of Paradise."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Some of His followers were perplexed, and some
Were silent, finding in their hearts no home
For such high dreams; Judas Iscariot
Rumbled and whined like some great iron pot
About to boil; so down the valley we
Trudged slowly toward the vineyards of the Sea.

Amid the gardens of Gennezaret,
Close to the *Via Maris*, we descried
A band of mourners by the waterside,
Clothed in gray sackcloth, ashes in their hair,
Going in haste, as though distraught they were
With grief. "Surely," said Peter, "I have seen
These forms before"; and Judas, who had been
Peering toward them, moaned as in a trance,
"These are the Baptist's men: some evil chance
Has come to him. . . . Accursèd she-wolf! . . . God,
I charge Thee, tarry not to wield Thy rod . . .
O cursèd, cursèd hour!"

A tremor shook
Our company, and many a kindled look
Of rage blazed up, where he of Kerioth walked
With James of Alphaï and Lebbaï; they talked
Red vengeance: Peter like an April day
One moment stormed, another, turned away,
Hiding his tears. Nathanael, I think,
Was all but weeping; and imprecations fell
Spasmodic, bitter, from the boyish mouth
Of John; thus we went forward. South
An half-hour's journey from Capernaum's gate
Andrew and James of Zabdai did await
Our coming; then our number was complete.
And now the marks of many pilgrim feet
Printed the path: hundreds of folk were come
To hear the Prophet of Capernaum.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Jesus, astonished by the gathering crowd,
Now called the Twelve aside, for He was fain
To hear the story of their late campaign.
But Judas had departed, and with him moved
His muttering friends; Peter, uncertain, roved,
Half-fain to follow, still more fain to stay,
And then drew in to hear what James would say,
And Matthew and his brother Andrew. First
Pale Matthew spoke; his happy story burst
Like floods of music from his lips; he told
How they had preached Repentance both to old
And young, and wise and simple, night and day:
How God their Father went with them: how they
Who heard had wept and laughed and put away
Old fettering sins; and Hope had waked again
In many a village that long years had lain
In Apathy's slack arms, breathing the air
Of a malignant, ill-concealed despair.
And many a kindly charity was done
In secret, and hard masters had begun
To serve their slaves. And from the utmost ends
Of Galilee, calling themselves His friends,
Pilgrims were trudging now, that they might hear
From His own lips the Message of Good Cheer.

As Jesus listened, rapture, like the rise
Of dawn on cloudland, glowed within His eyes.

"Father," He said, and gazed on high,

"Thanks be to Thee, this mystery,

From sage and scholar long concealed,

Is now to simple hearts revealed.

Accept this praise, Father, from Me,

That so it seemeth good to Thee."

Even while He spoke, the crowds began to pour
Out from Capernaum's gate; His face still bore

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Its radiant aspect, and I heard Him say
To some who walked beside Him on the way :

“Save his father there is none
In all the earth who knows a son :
And, save his son in all the earth,
No man knows a father’s worth.
All the time it lies concealed,
Unless by his own child revealed :
But now on Me is power bestowed
To reveal the Father, God.”

Happy, happy scene,
How thin the veil between
Earth and heaven, that short-lived hour.
Too soon we felt a shadow lower
Across the sunny landscape. Say, who knows
Where all this time is Judas? See, he goes
With sinister unrest apart
From Jesus; while his black eyes dart
Shiftily here and there
As though he lacked the heart to dare
Some cherished plan. Now he has flung
His hands out stiffly, and his tongue
Is loosed. He strides among
The turbulent outskirts of the crowd.—
Muffled at first, and then more loud
Their cries. And Jesus draws apart
With his own followers. To and fro,
Little groups of plotters go,
Hither and thither dart,
Sallying forth, retiring,
Whispering, conspiring;
The sound of their cryings
And shoutings and sighings
Rising and falling, like the roar
Of breakers on a shingle shore:

THE GALILEAN DAYS

"Murder! Murder! Blood for blood!"
"The mighty prophet of our God
Is slain!" "They took their swords to him!"
"Our swords will hack them limb from limb!"
"Revolution! War! War!"
Armies will be fed from far;
Willing blood will stain the sod;
Our children will not kiss the rod
Of Rome's false minion."

Just then came someone
And told the Master of the death of John
Of fierce Herodias' vengeance. Peter slipt
At Jesus' nod, forth to the beach, and leapt
Lightly into his boat, and Jesus cried:
"Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile,
Come rest you from your toil:
Jasper, come you,
And you, and you!"
(He spoke the word to Judas too.)

And so the boat is filled.
The folk have stilled
Their noise to see us go;
But are not slow
To follow, some in boats, some running round the
shore.
The fever grows, and more and more
Adherents join until the living stream
Swells to a seething flood;
And still they cry for blood,
And still the gleam
Of murder lights their eyes. No woman runs
With them, nor any child; it is no day
For these to leave their households or their play—
The work on hand is not for such as they.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

There go five thousand mothers' sons,
Marching along,
Rushing along,
Armed with clubs and knives,
Looking—from our boat—like a thousand hives
Of swarming bees let loose upon the sands.
And where the river merges in the Lake
Not pausing even to strip,
See how they dip
Full shoulder high, in bands
Across the ford, and shake
The water off like spaniels.

Now our ship
Has reached the other side; the rebels are wading
Around our boat in shoals; there is no evading.
Pallid yet calm, Jesus bids Andrew lower
The little sail, and then He steps ashore.

THE SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL

"O what have I heard on the streets of my city,
What have I seen where the hill paths wind?
Multitudes, multitudes, scattered abroad,
Pauper imploring pauper for pity,
Blind men clutching the skirts of the blind,
Multitudes seeking a shepherd from God.

Scattered abroad like sheep on the mountains,
Shepherdless, waiting in vain to be fed,
Crushed to the earth, nor caring to rise,
Never at morning led forth to the fountains
Never at eve to the waters led,
How should they know Him Whom now they
misprize?

THE GALILEAN DAYS

How should ye know your shepherd was tender?
Lantern nor sheep-call nor staff have ye known;
Full are the mouths of your prophets with lying:
O My people, My people, the splendor
Of Israel dawns not from Temple or throne:
But I have a dream . . . of a shepherd . . . dying."

He called to them to follow, and His tones
Made Orpheus' fabled lute a prophecy;
And hearts of stone did melt and yearn and cry,
And eyes as blind as trees did turn and gaze,
And faces dumb as flowers wake a-maze,
And smile; and all did follow, follow, follow
Until they came into an emerald hollow
Upon the rocky hillside, sweet with thyme;
And there He spoke to them. My stumbling rhyme
As much contains of that high oratory
As some small piping reed could tell the story
Of symphonies and choirs: His surcharged heart
Unloosed its fountains, till they saw in part
The vision He saw whole.

The stealthy hands
Of vengeance, Jesus said, had woven bands
Of blindness round their eyes in this dark hour
Of mourning for the Baptist. Now once more,
Like Imlah's son of old, He saw His race
Scattered abroad as sheep, but far His face
Was turned from Ahab's sin and Ahab's shame—
Only to seek forwandered sheep He came,
Of Israel's flock. . . .

. . . His rushing thoughts took wing
And did like chiming festal bells loud ring
Across the green hillside. His mighty form
Towered like a steadfast lighthouse in a storm

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Above that sea of faces. His great eyes
Gathered within their deeps the glow of skies
Long quenched, and many, gazing on Him there,
Rose from the greedy sea of their Despair,
Redeemed and happy souls; some laughed, some wept;
Spellbound some fell upon their knees and crept
Close to his feet. Some flung away their knives
And clubs, and humbly vowed their crippled lives
To Him; for, at the latter end, His speech
Had risen to a cry, while He did reach
His marvelous hands toward the multitude;
Pleading, yet noble, meek, yet God-like stood:

“Come, ye burdened and oppressed,
Come to Me and find your rest;
Meek, of lowly heart am I,
Learn of Me, let My yoke lie
Full upon you; thus you find
Rest for weary heart and mind:
My yoke is easy wear,
My burden light to bear.”

With that He ended. Ere His vast tones ceased
Upon the wondering air, darkness had crept
Along the quiet hillside: shadows leapt
Ghostlike from rock to rock; the spell-bound folk
Still lingered. . . .

.
Came a little lad, and spoke,
At dawn, of Jesus. Quoth I, “Come and break
Your fast in yonder inn.” A little fruit
And bread he ate, and then brought forth his lute
And sang this boyish song:

THE GALILEAN DAYS

THE FISHER LAD'S SONG

Across the shingle,
Mock armies mingle,
For we are playing at Romans on the sand;
While we are drilling,
A voice comes thrilling
Along the cheerful sea-breeze, "Front form! Stand!"

The Master!
Our hearts beat faster.
He's come to join us in our glorious game:
"O Jesus,
To please us
Tell us of heroes and their deeds of fame!"

We listened
Till white stars glistened
Upon the Lake, to tales of bygone things;
Then finer
Of things diviner,
Tales of the Empire of the King of Kings;

Of that to-morrow
When sin and sorrow
Would, like bad dreams at daybreak, melt away;
And lads were needed,
Our Captain pleaded,
To help God haste the coming of His day.

Then fail Him?
Oh, no, but hail Him
Our King and Captain in the great crusade.
Day-dreaming,
I saw Him gleaming
Before my face in battle garb arrayed;

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Till one day, trembling,
I marked the assembling
Of that great crowd; and all a-strain did trip
Hither
And thither
To catch the words that leaped from lip to lip.

"The waited hour
Has burst in flower;
Now up and lead His host against the foe!"
So near Him,
To cheer Him.
Did I with them across the waters go.

O wonder!
Mighty thunder
And gentle sunshine linkèd in His speech:
A rushing torrent,
Soft rippling current,
Cloud-high, still not beyond my little reach.

Ere He ended,
The sun had wended
His westering way; but the enchanted folk,
Who filled the meadow,
Marked neither shadow
Nor star nor dew-drop, until Peter spoke.

Quoth Peter, "Marry!
They must not tarry;
Bid them begone, for Violence has a way
Of following after
The bitter laughter
Of baffled Hunger. Lord, they must not stay."

THE GALILEAN DAYS

I lingered
Close by, and fingered
My goat-skin wallet, full of fish and bread,
Andrew saw me,
And must draw me
In play to Jesus, while I hid my head.

He knew me
And drew me
Close by His side, and loudly bade His folk
To gather
All together,
The crowd to feast. I thought He did but joke.

Till slowly
His most holy,
Most marvelous purpose clear before me stood.
He was able
To spread a table,
With my small supper, for the multitude.

First, bravely
And most gravely
He thanked the Lord for giving us this bread.
Then, taking it,
And breaking it,
As though He broke His very heart, He said,

And sighed,
"Take and divide";
And swift He smiled to see them serve each other.
Here and there
And everywhere
They freely feasted, and each served his brother.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Happy laughter
Followed after;
The gathering dusk grew jocund with their cries;
No longer
Brooded anger,
As earlier, within ten thousand eyes.

Like magic
Looks late so tragic
To looks of calm content and love now bend,
And many a casket
Of wine, and basket
Of fruit or fish is passed from friend to friend.

Judas only
Stands brooding lonely
With frowning brow apart from those that dine;
Then, turning toward
His radiant Lord,
He cries, "A miracle! The sign! The sign!"

"Did not the prophet
Of God speak of it,
Saying, Messiah, when He came, would feed
In desert places
The hungry faces
That turned to Him? Our King is come indeed!"

Rejoicing,
I joined in voicing
The ancient prophecy. From band to band
The kindling rumor
Flamed to a clamor;
And swords and clubs appeared in every hand.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

"Hail! Messias!

Lead on, stand by us!

Thou art the promised One; we follow Thee."

"Take Him

And make Him

Our leader now," cried Judas furiously.

Ah, wept then

My great Captain;

And striding toward His followers He cried:

"Unfasten

The boat, O hasten,

And I will meet you on the further side."

Embarking,

There were none marking

My shadowed figure huddled in the prow.

I watched Him banish

The crowd, and vanish

Into the gloaming, gloom upon His brow.

A great storm gathered;

We barely weathered

Its lashing furies: all alone were we.

A sense of error

Bred fearful terror,

Until our very souls seemed lost at sea.

Now looming

Through the gloaming

Ghostlike across the waves, He wends His way

Toward us, sighing

"Wherefore this crying?

'Tis I. Be not afraid. 'Tis break of day!"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

With these last words most like a fairy boy
He took his lute and fled. But I was fain
To muse upon that night of storm and pain.
I saw a host five thousand strong betwixt
The forest and the sea; each face transfixt,
And pointing toward Him, like a field of flowers
Turned to the sun. I saw, or ere two hours
Had passed, that spell-bound multitude transformed
Into a murderous rabble, mostly armed,
All urging Him to lead against the foe.
Lastly, I saw the Master turn and go
Alone into the dark: I saw the spray
Rise up between us as we pushed away
Across the Lake. O, but I cannot see
Into that Soul, Whose windows now reveal
An inward resolution: "*Love must kneel,*"
He seems to whisper, "*suffer, and stoop down
And die, before it dare to wear a crown.*"

Next day was Sabbath. Tired out, we slept late;
And by what means I know not, when we woke
The Master was beside us: calm He spoke,
Serene His eyes, "Haste, lads, the trumpet calls
To worship!" As we reached the sacred walls,
(I walked with Thomas) a young stone-mason came,
Crying to Jesus, "Save me from the shame
Of beggary, for you can understand—
You know the trade—Lord, heal my withered hand!"
Round us the worshipers were fast assembling;
In presence of them all the mason, trembling,
Knelt down at Jesus' feet; and Jesus laid
His hand upon his shoulder, and gently bade
Him come within. The place seemed chill and gray,
And there beneath the bema, "Who are they,"
I asked of Thomas, "with faces like the dead?"

THE GALILEAN DAYS

"The rulers of the Synagogue," he said,
"And with them too," he added very grim,
"A deputation from the Sanhedrim."
After the service ended, Jesus stepped
Before them all deliberately, and led
The mason forward, and in a loud voice said,
(He must have felt their murderous looks like steel
Upon Him),

"Is it right to harm or heal
On Sabbath days? To save or kill?
Is there one man standing here,
Say, his sheep fell in the mere
On the Sabbath, would not go
And pull her out? And men, you know,
Are far more worth than many sheep.
Do I break or do I keep
The Sabbath day? . . ."

(He swept them with His eyes:
Eyes which that instant seemed like dartling flame,
Because from those hard hearts no answer came.)

"Ah, unconfessing
Light you see, not yours the blessing.
Brother, stretch your withered arm
Hitherward. I heal, not harm."

The mason went home singing joyful psalms:
But as our company withdrew from church,
I overheard some whispers in the porch.
Great mutual hatred or great mutual love
Sometimes, as now, alas, hath power to move
Old enemies abreast: those Pharisees
Lo, arm in arm with these proud Sadducees,
I could not but divine their vile intent.
Back to the synagogue alone I went
That afternoon, and saw what I had feared

HE IS BECÔME MY SONG

To see: one old Rabban appeared
And from the roll blotted out Jesus' name;
And then another tottering Rabbi came,
Chanted the 'service for the dead; and last
Came the Chief Ruler solemnly, and cast
Ashes and dust upon the marble floor,
Crying aloud beside the exit door
Earth unto earth! The ritual was completed,
Jesus of Nazareth excommunicated.
For He was *dead unto the Law* henceforth,
A vagrant outcast, a shadow by the hearth:
Herem, Herem, anathema, separated,
Homeless, and being cursed, a curse, and fated
To wander, starve (they said), or burn or shiver
In this life and the next, outlawed forever.

I fled the hateful place in tears, and found
A great crowd standing silent on the shore
Round Jesus, listening to His heavenly lore.
Ill news flies fast; and from His speech I thought
Some swifter messenger than I had brought
Word of that ghastly rite, for thus He taught:

"Labor not for joys that fade.
Earth's best pleasures never stayed
Yearning soul of man, but he
Who brings his thirsty soul to Me
Nevermore need thirsty be.
Never need he hunger more
Who brings his hunger to My door:
My door is open wide,
Enter in and safe abide:
Come ye soon or come ye late
I will not excommunicate.
Feet may falter, hearts may doubt,
I will no wise cast you out."

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Next day one of the City Ten sent forth
A servant, bidding Jesus come and dine,
And bring His friends with Him. "Aye, poisoned wine,
Said Thomas; "there is sure some deep-laid plot,"
And counseled not to go. But Jesus sought
To oust suspicious thoughts, and bade us come;
Alas, how soon we wished ourselves at home!
Each of us took a place, and bowed his head
To hear the blessing chanted, then broke bread.—
Sudden, one of the Ten rose shouting, "Fie,
See the disciples of this great Rabbi:
They eat with unwashed hands! What says the Law?
Unclean, unclean!"

A silence fell. I saw
The face of Jesus, even while I did stare
Upon Him, alter, and a white flame flare
Thereon, that I have elsewhere only seen
Upon a mother's face, who found between
Her and her child some hurtful thing. And while
The whole room waited, suddenly the vial
Of His pent wrath was scattered into speech,
Whose mere material cadences did reach
Into my very marrow:

"Hypocrites!

Tearing the Scriptures into bits
With your rules and precepts—dare
Hurt My brothers sitting there;
God's most holy Tables said
Honor your parents: better dead
Than curse your mother or your father.
But *you* say, A son may gather
All the gold that might have gone
To a poor mother from her son,
And give it to the priests, and say
'Mother, it is given away

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

To God,' and thereby not disown
His nearest and his dearest one.

Ah, woe to you, blind guides! You say,
Swear by the sanctuary,
It is naught, but if you swear
By the offering lying there,
Keep your oath. . . . Fools, doth not he
Swearing by the sanctuary,
Swear by Him who dwelleth there?
They who by the altar swear,
Swear by all that lies thereon.
Swear by heaven, then by the throne
Of heaven—by Him who sitteth there,
Even by God Himself, you swear.

Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees,
Compacted of hypocrisies!
Straining the gnat from out the cup,
And then drinking the camel up!
Tithing anise, mint, and dill,
And then forgetting to fulfill
Things God counts greater, ye make less—
Justice, mercy, faithfulness.

O disingenuous Pharisee,
O Scribe, clad in hypocrisy!
Outside, the cup and platter clean;
Extortion and excess within;
Know, blind fool, who made the shell
Made what hides within as well.
Cleanse such things as are within,
Then, behold, all things are clean."

At these last words Jesus had fixed His gaze
On that mean face which had addressed us first;

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Then, like a thunder-clap, the climax burst:

“Woe, ye Scribes and Pharisees,
Bundles of vileness and disease!
Whited sepulchers ye are;
Outward, beautiful appear,
Outward, very righteous ones,
Inward, full of dead men’s bones:
Inward, full of filth ye be,
Full of all iniquity.”

Jesus had risen from table while He spoke;
But only when He ended were we ’ware
His place was empty, He about to fare
Forth from the house. As these last words of steel
Flashed out like swords, He turned upon His heel,
And strode away; we, horror-stricken, rose
And hasted after Him, and all these woës
Went echoing through my soul like the sad sound
Of a God sobbing. The people standing round
Were muttering with uplifted hands; one rent
His garments, moaning, he had lately meant
To leave his all and follow Jesus, now
He read the marks of madness on that brow,
And nevermore would follow. On the road
Crowds pressed, agog with questions, some were sad,
Some cold, some angry. Answering one, He said:

“Hearken then, and understand:
Not the dust upon your hand
When you eat defileth you,
But ill words that trickle through
Throat and tongue and lips, the while
You are speaking, make you vile;
He that hath a listening ear,
Let him listen now and hear.”

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Thus talking, through the swaying crowds He passed
Until we came to Peter's house at last,
And climbing to His room, we closed the door.
Flinging himself upon the rush-strewn floor:
"Undone!" cried Philip. "O beloved Master,
Your work is surely ended in disaster;
You have offended those great men. Come, hide
With us; death waits for all if we abide."
Pitying then his huddled, fear-struck herd,
He gravely spoke to them this warning word:

"Ware of prophets false that creep
Through the flock in skins of sheep;
Wisdom saves you many pangs:
Mark beneath the skins the fangs.
Do as money-changers do—
Sift the false coin from the true.
Ye shall know them by their fruits.
Are grapes born of bramble roots?
Figs of thistles? Even so
Good fruits on good trees do grow,
Poison fruit on poison tree.
One thing there is that cannot be,
Yea, two things: Never did devil
Father good: and nothing evil
Ever sprang from virtue's stalk.
Ever doth the gardener walk
Through his orchards, axe in hand:
Here a fair bough, there a brand.
So from good man's heart there slips
Naught defiling through his lips;
So from evil man there pours
Evil forth from darksome stores.
Tongues, like trees, will testify
Plain to every passer-by.

THE GALILEAN DAYS

Do not fear, for every tree
Shall at last uprooted be,
If it bear not on its bark
My heavenly Father's signet-mark.
Put your accusers from your mind:
They are blind leaders of the blind.
When one blind man leads another
They fall into the ditch together."

Here Peter cried out: "Master, prithee, tell
To us the meaning of this parable:
Who are these blind ones, stumbling, hand in hand?"
He answered: "They who do not understand.

Have ye not understood Me yet?
The food which yesterday you ate
Cannot defile you: it is gone;
Men are otherwise undone;
Are undone by things that win
Outward way from far within:
In the heart of man there lie
Evil thoughts, adultery,
Murder, disloyalty, and thieving,
Blasphemy and mean deceiving;
These are the things that make men vile;
But hands unwashed do not defile;—
Nay, Thaddai, Thaddai, sobbing still?
There was no shame; you did no ill.
Judgments make mirrors which condemn
The selfsame lips that uttered them;
And he who dares to judge My band
Finds his own judgment day at hand."

Bruised and bewildered sat the Twelve, but I
Had other thoughts than they: it would have been

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Stranger to me, had Jesus stayed within
This hedge of rules—despair had then been hurled
Forever on the hopes of all the world;
And just because He broke through, just because
His Gospel held to universal laws
Hope's dawn waxed brighter. So it seemed to me;
But the disciples were too dazed to see
As I saw. Had He rounded on His host
Because he gave no water, I think almost
They had been proud and pleased. But to condone
The offense on their behalf, nay, to have shown
Himself to ancient rites indifferent—
Rites marking Jew from Gentile—what *that* meant
They could not plumb; so in uneasy dread
They sat and whispered. Philip shook his head,
Looked at his friend, Bartolmai; James and Jude
Both rose to go: embarrassed and subdued,
The rest were following, though unspoken yet
Their Lord's *Shalom*. Not soon shall I forget
His look of anguish, as He turned to say:

“Will ye also go away?”

His eyes searched round
The huddled company, until they found
Judas; then on His face there spread a chill
Like a cloud's shadow on a sunny hill.

“Some of you do not believe . . .”

O, in that sighing, isolated word
It seemed to me as if my spirit heard
The first changes pealing through the gloom,
Of the dread knell that rang Iscariot's doom.

Once more He spoke: “Around, within,
And through God's Realm, lie realms of sin;

THE GALILEAN DAYS

It is not yours to separate
The good from ill, but soon or late
The reaping angels of your God
Will root the tares from out the sod.
Did He take all ill away
From our earthly life to-day,
Who knows, the good might vanish too!
Patience! Your Father cares for you."

So our communion ended for that night,
And forth we stole into the full moonlight,
Which, ere we went, enabled us to trace
A settled sadness on the holy Face.
Nor was it lifted, when next morning we
Stood listening to His words beside the Sea.
Few others lingered there; and those who heard
From far, might have mistook His echoing word
For sobbing waves, or for the muffled roar
Of tide-borne pebbles on the shelving shore.

"Woe, Chorazin, unto thee!
Woe, Bethsaida, unto thee!
Had the mighty works done here
Been done in Sidon and in Tyre,
They had repented long ago
In sackcloth and in ashes. Woe,
Woe to you, for you, I say,
Will pay the price on Judgment Day;
You will suffer worse than they.

Also thou, Capernaum,
Which as high as heaven wouldst come,
Thou shalt be brought down to hell;
For had such mighty works as well
Been done in Sodom as in thee,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

She had not perished miserably.
Woe to you, for you, I say,
Will pay the price on Judgment Day;
You will suffer worse than they."

Then toward an ancient follower He bent,
Whose days for pilgriming far were almost spent.
"Mnason," He said, and sighed, "I must
Leave this land awhile; I trust
Jasper to you, and I shall tell
The time of our return. Farewell."

Slowly, leading the Twelve, He sallied forth;
Long watched we, as they mounted toward the North.

BOOK II

Toward Jerusalem

The spring had passed, and slumberous summer lain
Amid her leaves, when I beheld again
Jesus and His disciples on the shore.
A change was on them all: carefree no more
Those simple faces. I took John aside
And questioned him; awhile he sobbed and cried,
Then dried his tears, and sitting at my feet
He told me all.

“Brother, to-day we meet
Not as we parted; we are changed, I think,
For we have breathed such breath
Of rapture—stooped to drink
Such bitter and mysterious draughts of being,
Simple things are grown strange, and many a link
We thought eternal snapped, and many a tie
That seemed most fragile to our former seeing,
We know now cannot die. . . .”
“What then befell,”
Said I, “after He bade farewell
To Mnason and to me?”

JOHN'S SECOND NARRATIVE

Northward He climbed the valley, wearily
From green Gennezaret,
And crossed the ridge at Ramah, and then set
His face toward the sea.
Reaching the plain, He wandered north to Tyre;
We never dared follow our Master nigher
Than full a boat's length. Lost in dream went He

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Toward the shore.
It was no blissful dream like those of yore,
Whose *Hallel*, Jasper, O how happily
You heard Him sing
In earlier spring,
When God seemed giving Him His heart's desire.
Now mournful visions dazed
His soul; three times He turned and gazed
With yearning face and wide-flung hand
Toward His Fatherland.

Yet when we reached the plain,
Crowds flocked to Him again;
And glittering thoughts came to Him free
Beside the glittering Tyrian sea.
Once I heard Him mutter low:

“Tyre had repented long ago.”

Another day
I heard Him say:

“They shall come from East and West
And find within the Realm their rest.”

But even while He spoke
His low speech broke
Into a sob, and once again His eyes
Turned southward where were still to see
The soft green heights of Galilee.

“Master, death lies
Behind those smiling hills,” said Peter,
“And yet you stare
So lovingly upon them. . . . Is death sweeter
To you than life?

You have no wife,
Up yonder, yet you stare and stare.”

“Oh, Peter, neither home, nor wife nor child to care,
And yet my heart is there.”

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"But, Lord," said Peter, frowning still,
"Murder and death are not God's will."
So on we struggled. Presently I heard
The sound of hurrying footsteps close behind;
And lo! without a word
A Grecian lady gazed
Full in my face, and while, amazed,
I tried to speak, she passed by, hastening toward
The Master. She spoke, then sought to bind
Her hands about His feet,
But He moved on oblivious, while she poured
Her plaintive cries against the desert air:
"Save my little daughter:
Demons, Lord, have caught her!
Since ever I bare her
They rend her and tear her—"

Still on He moved, as though He quite ignored
All her cries
And moans and sighs.
But ah, it was not so;
I know, I know
He heard within those pleading notes the voice
Of the dark Gentile world, and made His choice.
And when we lads began to plead:
"She crieth after us, will you not heed?"
He looked toward the land He loved,
And, half to her, half to the wind that moved
Whither He yearned to be, I heard Him sigh:
"Crieth after us? . . . But I
Hear always another cry:
Far behind yon hills of home
Lost sheep of Israel roam,
Crying very piteously . . .
It is My Father calling Me!"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Just think! He hears the very voice of God
Summoning Him from far within the gloom
Of that devouring fire
Whose smoldering flames drench this our native sod
With prevalent terror. He turned and faced this doom
With words of soft desire.

O, who can tell
How pure His heart must be,
When He can hear and see
God in dire necessity
Behind so hard and thick a shell?

There's one word, like a bell,
Rings in my soul; that's Loyalty.
Aye, brother, that's the word whose strain distended,
Then burst, the small circumference of my mind;
Now I with it am poured forth and am blended
With elements of a diviner kind.
Think, Jasper, Loyalty has brought Him back;
For we possess the Kingdom, and, till the crack
Of doom, we dare not say
It shall one instant stay
Upon its way.
To whisper, it might fail
Here in dark Israel,
Were to admit man could defeat the Lord.
Nay, but our Master saith,
Fear not the touch of death
On thy mere flesh; loosed be the silver cord,
Broken the golden bowl,
None can unloose thy soul,
Thy spirit remaineth whole
Till men become the conquerors of God.
Is not this land thy fathers trod
Enough for thee? Though thou should'st kneel
At last in thine own blood, fear not: thy soul is leal.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

. . . Slowly on we went;
The Master's eyes were bent
Upon the ground; she, too shy to accost
A second time, followed with tears. "Not sent!"
He murmured still, "save to the lost, the lost
Of David's flock." At last, our lodgings gained,
We sat to eat, but there she stood and plained
So pitiful and pale beside the door;
Then crossed the floor
And fell before His feet.
Would He repel her still?
Slowly and spare, like drops of water falling
From icicles at wintry noon's wan heat,
Words fell from His sad lips: "First are to fill
The children's mouths with meat: I hear them calling."
I wot she could not understand
That tender gesture of His hand.
A second time she felt repelled;
The gift she sought was still withheld.
And yet I fancy she could trace
Her mirrored sadness in His face.
Woke then within her breast
Fresh hope: and closer still she pressed
About His feet, while faith fought hard with dread,
Until He smiled.

"You Grecians have," He said,
"An adage more astute than sweet:
*Fill the children first with bread,
Then the puppies at their feet.*"

Thereat I think she knew the battle won;
Her eyes, late somber, shone with sudden fun:
"Yea, Rabban, but can you forget
We have a proverb wiser yet?
*Dogs deserve the meats that fall
In their master's banquet hall.*"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

What we call wit the Lord called faith:
"For that your child is healed," He saith.

ON THE ROAD TO TYRE

Now she can never walk alone
Along that winding Tyrian road,
For all its sunny way is strown
With memories of God.

And when at eve the waves are still,
She hears His laughter echoing there;
And when the raging tempests fill
The dark tormented air,

She hears the things He used to say,
Above the tumult of the sea,
And still, as in a bygone day,
She keeps His company.

And while the wild sea birds assemble
On yonder islet with soft cries,
She marks their beauty flash and tremble
About His lips and eyes.

Next day longing turned His feet
Homeward. O how safe and sweet
That word should sound in pilgrim's ear;
But now its tones were jarred by fear.
For not alone within the Temple walls
Are Hate's grizzled hands outspread:
There, where the gorgeous fountain leaps and falls
Before dark Herod's palace, plots are bred

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Like maggots: so we wandered clear
Of Herod's province, through the mighty calm
Of Lebanon, along Leontes' vale,
Over the ridge and down the Jordan dale.
And there by many a palm
And springing well we found
A little Pagan shrine upon the ground.

By one such shrine we rested for an hour.
A marble statue of the wood-god Pan
Rose like a lily-flower
Beside a cataract whose fountains ran
Toward Jordan jubilant. I can but linger
Over the memory of that scene so fair
And so serene. The Master, while His finger
Lay lovingly upon the marble hair
Of the Greek god, said, "Here, where many a prayer
Hallows the solemn air,
Sing we a Psalm, whose music long ago
Stirred first to life in this same forest glade,
Born from an exile's heart." Then soft and slow
We sang those words, while gentle Matthew played
The melody upon his ivory flute;
Iscariot only sat apart and mute.

THE EXILE'S SONG

This thirsty hind is panting for the streams,
This weary soul is crying loud for Thee,
O living God; in waking or in dreams,
In Sion, as of old, Thy face to see.

I used to lead the chorus as we strode
In festal throng to Sion's courts of old:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Tears now my bitter food; and "Where is God?"
The foemen taunt, until my heart grows cold.

Be still, my soul; lift up thy head:
Cast grief away; fling far thy dread;
Trust thou in God; yet wilt thou see,
With joy, His face shine out on thee.

Alas! even Hermon's giant top can bring
No comfort; dearer far the little mound
Of sacred Sion, and far sweeter sing
Kidron's shy rills than Jordan's mighty sound.

Yea, here are only tears and moaning cries:
Jordan's deep waters cry and moan, and deep
Within my soul's dark currents echoes rise
And fall, and Jahweh's waves and billows leap.

Send forth Thy light and truth to guide me home,
To bring me to Thy holy hill, Thy shrine;
Yea, to thine altar, Lord, I long to come
And tune the old songs to this harp of mine.

Be still, my soul; lift up thy head:
Cast grief away; fling far thy dread;
Trust God; of Him thy song will be
When all His grace shines forth on thee.

That night we slumbered deep among the hills.
But while the mirrored stars at break of day
Still danced within the rills
That ran to Jordan, we resumed our way.
O, bright and warm that afternoon
Across the Lake the sunlight shone!

TOWARD JERUSALEM

But after us from many an eye
Chill glances darted furtively.
O rich and kind the lispèd speech
Of curling waves upon the beach!
But cold and mute the averted faces
That passed us in the market places.
The only soul that heard
On all that coast His word
Was he whose ears, lifelong in sickness sealed,
Now, since he heard our Lord by faith, were healed.
I think only great faith could merit
Such a great expense of spirit
Given very gallantly;
But we who love our Lord can see
His costs. He took the man aside,
Touched his ears, and touched his tongue,
And looking up to heaven sighed,
Then loud and strong
"Ephatha" cried.
The man was healed. And with us now there went
The facile crowd. But there not long we spent.
For us that eastern coast is never home,
So we set sail and soon were come
To Dalmanutha. . . .

MENAHM'S WARNING

. . . "Stranger, say
What brings you down the shore
Or ever our sails are furled, or ever
The wave dries on the oar?"

"Prophet, I fear for Thee and Thine;
While yonder moon sailed small

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Four Pharisees sought audience
Within my master's hall.

With Herod hour-long they whispered there,
Jesus, concerning Thee;
And when at last they took their way,
He trembled while his face grew gray:
The words he sought he could not say,
He stared but did not see.

Since John's head tumbled smoking down
Upon his dungeon floor,
My master starts like a silly girl
At every creaking door;

At every bush that stirs or shakes
Against his purple dress,
He starts and stares. God save us all
From such blood-guiltiness.

Last night at supper the courtiers
Gossiped idly of Thee:
"A brand new prophet," someone said,
"An old one risen from the dead,"
"Perchance it is he whom the ravens fed,"
"Oh, who might it otherwise be?"

"The ghost of John the Baptist risen,"
I heard a graybeard sigh,
And suddenly all that sat at meat
Leapt at the sound of a cry.

It was the Asmonean Prince,
His bloodshot eyes a-stare;
His twitching lips unbared his teeth,
His lean hands tugged his hair.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"He whom I murdered . . . John . . . O God . . .
Arisen from the dead . . .
The avenging furies whir their wings . . .
I am gone mad," he said.

His frenzy fell as suddenly
As it arose: but still
His seething wrath is fostering
The lust to work Thee ill.

That lust might fade, did meaner hands
Not seek his rage for tool
To bring Thee to Thy last repose;
But, while his servant Menahem knows,
Lord Herod shall not serve Thy foes,
Like any simple fool.

Away, away! or, ere the day
Be done, thy fate is sealed;
For Herod's spies are a thousand eyes
In city, lane, and field."

Thus spake proud Herod's foster-brother, torn
Betwixt old loyalty and love new-born,
And vanished like a bird;
Nor have we seen, nor heard
Aught of him since, but ere upon the ooze
The marks of Menahem's shoes
Had faded, treacherous voices jarred the air,
Begging Him to work a sign
To prove Himself Divine:
"Sign! They insult God, who crave it,
None shall ever say I gave it."

The spies crestfallen fled;
But other enemies soon filled their stead,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And the ubiquitous breath of treachery
Blew like the bitter brine
Of ocean on our cheeks perpetually.
Natheless God gave no sign,
His time was not yet come.
"Let us away, away," the Master said:
"There is no peace at home,
Our help is in the hills.
Let us return now to those happy rills
That water Jordan." Soon we were afloat
In Peter's boat.
The Master brooded darkly in the prow
Till supper time, when Peter passed Him fish,
No bread upon the dish:
"Master, somehow
We all forgot the bread."
Then Jesus pointing toward Tiberias said:
"Little ones, beware, beware
Of the leaven spreading there."

We did not understand, but sought to trace
Some deep reproach of our forgetfulness
Upon His face.
Ah, no, His sole distress
Was lest the evil leaven
Might have been given
To us, His friends, by those dark Pharisees,
Or by that evil king who had besprent
All Galilee with doubt and disillusionment.

We landed near Bethsaida Julias,
And while we moored our boat
There strayed across the bright-embroidered grass
A pale blind lad
Drifting here and there

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Like a dead leaf afloat
Upon a forest pool.
"Why do you stand and stare,"
Said Peter, "at that blind bewildered fool?"
"Alas," said I, "since he
Should be called *Galilee*,
Blind Galilee amid the flowers."
Ah, to have passed by and never seen
His glory Whom my heart adores!
Ah, to have been the brother of His youth,
And never to have seen His grace and truth!
Well, Jesus healed that blind man; can it be
His Spirit shall give sight to Galilee?

Onward we pressed into the country places,
Into deep silence, solitude and shade,
There, where the youthful Jordan interlaces
Her silver arms through many a forest glade.
Jesus was leading. Like a star He went,
Majestic, solitary, but now and then
We caught a trailing phrase, like fire half spent,
The while we followed in his train:

" . . . Despised of men . . . "

" . . . A man of pain . . . "

"The Kingdom of God proclaims its awful Law. . . ."

"Must suffer . . . must."

In solemn awe
We stumbled after Him
Until the day grew dim,
And lofty Hermon's snows
Blushed like a wilding rose.
Then I, John, crept
Closer to Him: "Master, 'tis time we slept;
Here let us rest awhile—

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

All sorrow hath its close;
Leave us to watch and weep,
And do Thou sleep."
The open fields were chill and hoar,
So in a hillside cave we made a floor—
Dried heath, and last year's fern—
And found some wood to burn.
Lebbæus broiled a little basketful
Of fishes he had caught in Merom's pool.
Jesus blessed and broke the bread,
And after we had supped, we said
"Our Father," and lay down to sleep, lulled by the
bulbul's tune.

Jackals, howling at the moon,
Wakened me, then heard I soft
Murmurs from the Master; soon
I saw that Someone Else was there.
Perhaps a passing herd, holding aloft
His lighted lanthorn: for Jesus' face and hair
Shone like sunny noon . . .
Even while I gazed
On that sweet sight, amazed,
I slept till sudden morning blazed
On waking forms that hitched their belts and bound
their sandal shoon.

I have no words to render,
O brother, to thy sense
That summer morning splendor,
Majestic and immense.
Ere yet on Hermon's shoulder climbed the sun,
His rosy finger touched the banks of dun
And dappled cloud; and when Dawn fleet-foot came,
He laid a chaplet woven of leaves of flame

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Upon her brow. The waiting mist, that blurred
Merom's blue marshes, saw the signal, stirred,
Wavered, and tarried where it lay,
Then slowly drew away
Toward the high valleys, like a vast white bird.
But now the lakelet, earth's new-opened eye,
Gemlike absorbed the glory of the sky,
Till suddenly the mist began to race
Around us, and we could but trace
Dimly here and there
Some sunlit mountain stair.
Then these too faded, and the quickened ear
Might through the shrouded stillness plainly hear
The far-off murmur of the rushing waves
That leap and tumble forth from Paneas' rocky caves.

Silent we stood, and soon
A sudden merry tune
Burst forth from many a feathered throat
As the first sunshaft topped the mountain crest;
And in his long stride pierced and smote
The mists from Hermon's breast.

We breakfasted, and went upon our way,
Jesus not grave and bent
As formerly He went,
Not now ahead alone, but brotherly
Tramping along with Peter, James, and me,
Lighting from day to day
Our obscure minds with penetrating gleams
Of dawn, unfolding to our wondering eye
A pageant like the wide-flung pageantry
Of that fair morning hour above the streams
Where Cæsar frowns on Pan.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Like a vast scroll
His Spirit did unroll
Until we saw a plan
Spread widely out from God to man;
But ah, the haze
Of our dull hearts hid many a splendid summit from
our gaze.

Yet He was often weary,
And once He wistful came
Toward us with a query:

“Whom do men say I am?”

“I heard them say, ‘The Baptist,’” cried my brother;
“Some think Thou art Elias,” said another:
“‘Jeremiah,’ some of the people had said,
Or one of the prophets risen from the dead.”

“And who do ye say that I am?”

If Peter, answering, spoke for all, God knows;
But this is very sure, he spoke for me:
Hardly for Thomas, nor do I suppose
For dark Iscariot. “Master,” whispered he,
“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

There, brother, are you with us? Can you kneel,
And pray to yonder man, and know the stone
You kneel on now will be worn smooth and hollow
By centuries of worship? Can you feel
Yourself alone with God, standing alone
With Jesus? O can you follow, follow
Those feet into some dire and dreadful place
That waits even now their coming? Can you face
Darkness unknown with Him, and understand
That holding Him you hold God by the hand?

“Happy Simon,” Jesus said,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"Happy Simon, Son of Grace,
The veil is lifted from thy face,
Not by hands of flesh and blood,
Only by the Hand of God.
In full congregation thou
Wilt confess thy Master now;
Also unto thee I say
Thou art Cephas, from to-day
Vainly hell may plot in session,
Vainly may her hosts assemble
Round the rock of this confession
Whereupon I build My Temple.
Quit of hell, now with the key
Of God's Realm in thy hand, go free:
Here, or out beyond the sun,
Henceforth earth and heaven are one."

The Master's soaring words surprised us all:
We felt like some bewildered crew
Emerging from a blinding pall
Of mist into the blue
Of summer seas, yet we had clung to Him,
I fain would think, however dim
The skies; for we had been content
To lean on Jesus just because He leant
Upon His Father, been content to feel
Those Spirit breezes steal
About our blinded eyes,
And know they blew from brighter skies.
Once or twice a veiled word
Had stolen from His lips half heard.
But now Peter's impulsive soul
Had boldly rushed along the path
And reached his Master's goal.
And lo! in meekness, not in wrath
The mighty answer sailed

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Through our darkness like a star,
And the secret stood unveiled.
We who saw it shook and paled,
Whispering to one another,
"Do you understand it, brother?"

Great words approve or else condemn
All who hearken unto them.
Thomas shook a doubtful head;
Philip wept; but Judas said:
"At last . . . at last! . . .
We shall return
To Galilee to-morrow;
Soon shall the ancient banner burn
On the bright air, and Israel learn
A cure for all her sorrow."

I heard no more of that; for Jesus drew
Us three, His earliest followers, apart;
And, even as now I tell it all to you,
He told us all His heart.
Alas! our ill-tuned ears must have misheard
Many an exalted word;
Alas! our dazzled eyes must have been blind
To many a facet of His mind.
Echoes of a far-off song we hear,
Yet listen half in fear.
Glimpses of a far-off height we gain,
Yet blurred as though with rain,
Or with a welling tear.

Or ere—I learned—the lilies in the meadows
Seven times had blown about His childish feet,
Stole on His senses shadows
Half-somber and half-sweet.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

The forms from which those shadows fell
Were prophecy and oracle,
Familiar as that lovely mother's face,
Whereon He used to trace
The changing music of the sacred words.
Soon those translucent shadows of the mind
Assumed reality,
And in the Boy's imagination were defined
As hopes that He might be
That One in whom the promises of God
Clothed themselves at last in flesh and blood.
But were this haunting presage
To be fulfilled, a message
Would come; therefore this Child of tender years
Waited on God with eager hopes and fears.

Then of the journey to Jerusalem
He told just what He told us by the sea,
When He began to preach in Galilee,
But added how there came
Sweet singing while He tarried
Within the holy place.
This Psalm spread wings and carried
His soul before God's Face:

"I will tell of Jehovah's decree:
He said, lo! Thou art My son
This day begotten by Me;
Ask! Thy behest will be done!"

And at night, with none but the stars to see,
He worshiped in quiet Gethsemane:

"O Jehovah our Lord,
Great is Thy name among men!
I, who am but a babe
Before Thee, an infant unweaned,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Yearn to lift up My voice
To sing of the majesty
Towering above Me afar.
Thou hast cast up ramparts of night
And silence, around Thy throne:
Lifting my eyes I behold
Thy lampions, moon and stars.
Then I say, 'What is man
That Thou art mindful of him?
What is the son of man,
That Thou hast visited him?' "

Home He went with a heart as gay
As a lark's first song in an April day,
Though 'twas plenty of work and little of play,
And worse when Joseph passed away,
And His laughing mother grew grim and gray.
Is He earning enough for the children's meals?
Mattocks and plows and yokes and wheels,
Till His brain is sick and His body reels;
But still in the gloaming the young man steals
Out alone to His trysting place,
And His face is bright like a lover's face.

Why does the son of Mary stay
Alone on the hilltop till break of day?
What passion of spirit drives Him forth
Alone by night from the sheltering hearth?
At home, a fire, sweet friends, warm food;
Here starlight, silence, solitude.
Nay, there are times when the furthest star
Can be nearer than brothers and sisters are;
Times when the hush of the evening hills
Is a cup where the counsel of God distills.
Jasper, I think His soul woke wide
To the presence of God on yon hillside,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Unfolding to Him, like a mountain rose
To the sun who seeks her amid the snows.
I think His soul lay open to God
Out there in the silence and solitude,
Until the fullness of Love Divine
Poured over its rim like golden wine,
And the joys and sorrows of God were one
With the joys and sorrows of the Son.

Oh, who can tell what a man shall endure,
Whose heart is pure as God is pure,
What pains on such an one are hurled
When he looks on a God-estranged world.
In that dark womb the Passion had birth
Which drew the Master-builder forth—
Forth from the bench to the wilderness
And back to the haunts of men's distress.
For now God's plan had become His plan—
To be the Love of God to man.
He told us too how He had known
Himself for God's beloved Son
Long, long years before there stole
Messias' name into His soul.
And His eyes were marvelous to see,
As He talked to James and Peter and me;
But the light that shone reflected there
Seemed as it shone from a golden stair
That melted into the upper air,
Yet was He meek as a child might be.

Faint and far-off at first He heard the stroke
Of His appointed hour
In Rumor's voice, which spoke
Concerning pilgrims seen to pour
From every quarter down to Jordan valley.
And then from Galilee they went,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And brought back tales of the crowds beginning to rally
Round one who cried, "Repent, repent."
And when the returning pilgrims came
To Jesus' workshop, He, listening, bent
Over his chisel with eyes aflame;
For He knew that at last His Father had sent
Another prophet into the land,
And knew that the Kingdom of God was at hand.
Upon his inner ear there fell
The muffled sound of the rising swell
Beating the shores of that unknown sea
On whose mysterious bosom He
Must voyage soon. And a prophecy
Of storms to come tolled like a knell
Far out on the tides of destiny,
And even then He saw afar
His Spirit and the world's at war.
I asked Him why He came not down
At once to Jordan. He answered with almost a frown,
"I cannot tell." But now it is plain to me.
Repentance and confession
Drew that vast procession
From the farthest marches of Judah and Galilee.—
Discord, hunger, the hope of rest.
None of these were in Jesus' breast;
He had no sins to be confessed;
And yet at last He went. Andrew and I,
As I told you once, on a tamarisk mounted high,
Saw Him baptized, but we did not see
His thoughts within; and now by Paneas' springs
Jesus told us many secret things.
He told us He had not been an hour
With the crowds at Jordan until the power
Of that rugged man with the eyes aflame
With a frenzy of visionary fire

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Swept upon Him, and overcame
Every scruple and every desire
Save now to dedicate the whole
Of His life—mind, spirit, body, soul—
To these his brothers whose hearts had been stirred
To repent, by John the Baptist's word.

Till that hour the sacred veils
Of meekness and humility
Had hung upon His inward eyes like scales;
Never until then had He
Dared think the Great Deliverer
In His own person might appear,
But when John the Baptist stood
An instant hesitant, subdued,
And when in downcast trembling tones he said,
"I have need to be
Baptized of Thee,
And comest Thou to me?"
Then in an instant, sharp and dread—
One awful lightning flash from heaven—
He saw His destiny outspread;
His clouds of lowliness were riven,
And God had shown Him at a glance
His own Divine significance.

Or ere—He told us—He had left
The fontal pool, the very heaven seemed reft
Above His soul
From pole to pole,
And a familiar voice fell plain
Upon His inward ear,
Proud and Fatherly and fain:
"Thou art My Son most dear."
And a vast Breath of mighty Being

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Seemed to hover and to quiver
Closer than touch, more sharp than seeing,
And whisper, "Henceforth I am with Thee forever."

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He left the crowds and wandered forth alone:
His feet, He told us, seemed to float like birds
Above those tracts of stone.
How many days and nights were gone
He knew not, but the lessening flocks and herds
Had faded far behind,
And the hot desert wind,
Barren of all sweet scent and sound,
Moaned along the parchèd ground,
When in a swiftly deepening gloom
He found Himself on Quarantana's base
Shut within a little room
Of shelving stone; and in that somber place
He brooded on the sacred path that lay
Before His ready feet.—
Day followed night, and night succeeded day,
He slumbered not, nor did He eat,
And while the long fast deepened brighter grew the Way.

Not in itself more bright, but clearer seen—
Yet only seen within—He saw it rise
Through tracts of Love where man had never been,
Through virgin fastnesses of Sacrifice.
Now Hunger draws her fingers
Across His trancèd face;
But while His spirit lingers
Beyond the bounds of space,
Or just while it is leaving
Those vasty realms of thought,
An awful form comes cleaving

TOWARD JERUSALEM

The air, unbid, unsought:

"Perchance what passed in Jordan's stream
Was only a fantastic dream.

Ere Thou make Thy final choice

Test the vision and the voice:

If Thou be the Child Divine

Wherefore here in hunger pine?

Turn these useless stones to food

For Thyself—and the multitude."

But Jesus said: "Though men may eat,

In plenty, loaves of whitest wheat,

Yet shall God humble them, and prove

His way to be the way of Love;

And suffer them to hunger sore,

And bring strange manna to their door

Till they learn that man is fed

On heavenly, not on earthly bread.

On everything that doth proceed

Out of God's mouth Mansoul shall feed;

And I came forth from God . . . I came

That so they might have life . . . I am

The Bread of Life. . . ."

Behold,

The stones are fallen from His slackened hands,

The tempting voice is hushed, and Jesus stands

In silence on the dreary desert wold.

The hours go by, day falls,

The tawny lion calls

Across the echoing steep,

Black night succeeds translucent eve,

Still Jesus cannot sleep.

"What shall I not achieve?"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

He whispers, "All the wealth of heaven
Is Mine to use as I may choose.
But how must I maintain what God has given?"
Thereat returned in subtler wise
That evil counselor, now in the guise
Of Holy Writ. Upon a dream-spun bridge
Jesus has drifted to the Temple ridge.
What bustling midge—
Another—yet another, darts and sports
Across the Temple courts.
These are the solemn scribes and priests,
Celebrating holy feasts.
Whispered then the Voice malign:
"Those His Priests will ask a sign.
The sacred guardians of the Law
Will kneel and worship Thee in awe,
If Thou leap down from here to there.
Is it not written, 'In the care
Of His angels He shall keep
Thee in all places rough and steep.
Lest in falling Thou be thrown
At any time against a stone'?"

The wild beasts of the wilderness
Pause and cower in rude distress.
Erect His awful figure stands
Beneath the stars; with rigid hands
He fights a battle fierce and slow
Against His foul incorporate foe.
For all we know of holiness
Hath a body for its dress,
But the evil Prince of air
May no created body wear.
O brother, wild the uncharted seas
Where ride our ghostly enemies;

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Perilous the unshapen ways
Where Satan spends his nights and days;
Fearful the silent battlefield
Where is neither sword nor shield.
I do not know what fierce words shook
The desert air that hour,
While He in mental reverie did look
Down from the Temple tower.
Only He told us, His outwearied mind
Did at the last one final swordthrust find
From Holy Writ: "Thou shalt not tempt," He said,
"The Lord Thy God." A cloud of surly red
Swam through His dream, a vasty billowing belt
Blotting the Holy City out of sight.
Once more He felt
His feet upon the mount; the mist rose white
About her shoulder, but the Spirit drave Him
Beyond the cloudwreath to her furthest height;
Laid wizard hands upon His eyes and gave Him
Mysterious power; from the sheltered niche
Of basalt where He sat He saw afar
The kingdoms of this world embroidered rich
On her wide vesture, each a priceless gem,
Each lovely as a star.
Alas! there burned in them
A fitful, baleful gleam.
To win the world for God—that was His dream;
Nay more, it was his chosen task.
But how? For priests and scribes would ask
Obedience that He could not pay;
And eager Israel would turn away
In sad despair
From One who spoke her fair
Of heavenly Kingdoms, yet who would not wear
An earthly crown. Even as the Master gazed

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Across those outspread realms, amazed,
The Spirit that drave Him there began to say:
 "All these realms are Thine to-day,
 If in Thy soul Thou own my sway.
 Set on Thy brows their earthly crown;
 And after, make their souls Thine own."

How often, since, that demon voice has sought
To lure Him from the sacred path He chose!
But all in vain, for on the mount He fought
And won the day. His final words were those:
 "Satan, get thee hence! Behold
 In the Scriptures we are told,
 *Worship only God the Lord,
 Serve Him, obey His Word.*"

With that last stroke
The fiendish spell was broke,
And round our Master bands
Of strength were girded as by angel hands.
The leaping pulses calmed within His breast:
He ate and drank,
And at the silver touch of evening sank
Into a dreamless rest.
A mighty lion slumbered on the sands
Beyond the cave that domed his far more mighty guest.

There, brother, that's the picture traced
On my mind by His parsimonious speech,
As He and I, and James and Peter paced
One dewy morning up and down a reach
Of mossy turf, while James the Little and Jude
Prepared our breakfast. Later, on the road
We four still walked together toward the town
Of Cæsarea, o'er her towers a crown

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Of blue smoke hung,
Most like a silken shawl
Careless from Hermon's dazzling shoulders flung:
"I have something to tell you all,"
Said Jesus, "We will tarry here,
Till the other nine appear."

Soon they were with us, and He turned
His face toward the East,
Where like a magic rose the sunrise burned
Above the desert; and all His followers whist
From speech and song to see
His white robe flushing crimson, like a cloud;
Unconscious of His glory He
Gazed on us, and I shook
To see His look:

His face was wan and old,
His robe now pallid as a shroud;
And while He spoke the very air grew cold:
"Brothers, a Mighty Passion waits
The Son of man in Sion's gates . . .
Rejected and despised of men . . .
Done to death at last, and then
In three days, arisen again."

We stood transfixed; the stones about our feet
Were not more still than we, till Peter rushed
Toward Him, plucking at His gown:
"Far be it from Thee, Master, fie on Thee;
These are dead tales." And then his raging hushed;
For Jesus, slowly, painfully
Whispered that phrase
Which He had spoken in the desert ways:
"Satan, Satan, get thee hence!"
And there, alluring and immense,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Peter with his inward eye
Saw the realms of this world lie
Spread before his Master, while
He would not receive them,
Nor achieve them
By force or by guile.
And Jesus' words fell like a sigh:
 "Peter, Peter, would you be
 Stone of stumbling unto Me?
 You but think the thoughts of man;
 God's thoughts weave another plan:
 His Christ is kin to grief and pain,
 Smitten, smiting not again,
 Like a lamb for slaughter fated,
 Like a leper separated."

Oft He unveiled thus
To us
The Suffering Servant's face,
And sought
With many a kindling thought
To interlace
The somber vision with Messias' name.
Trembling, we fancied that there came
Upon that spirit so tense and fine
A weakness, born of grief,
A kindly madness, a mind's anodyne
To bring relief
And ease of soul, devisal all Divine.
For ever He scanned our faces
With eager wistful eye,
And once, as we took our places,
I paused, ere I passed Him by,
To loosen His latchet-laces,
And His anguish broke to a cry:
 "Twelve men whose hearts were leal and true

TOWARD JERUSALEM

I thought I chose when I chose you,
That morn on Hattin's grassy level.
I chose eleven, and a devil!
And oh, if any of you be
Turning away ashamed of Me
Or My words in this dark day,
The Son of Man will turn away
From such in presence of His Father
While the angelic hosts foregather
Round His triumphant throne; for some
Standing here will surely come
To see before their latest hour
That the Kingdom of God is come with Power."

Still always
A hint of coming shame
And coming splendor crept across our days,
Alternate cloud and flame.

That week was almost ended, when He led
Peter and James and me away alone
Up Hermon's slopes. "Stay not far off," He said,
"While I am praying." Against a mossy stone
He knelt; we three stood near
Shaking and cold with fear,
While we did hear
Fragments of talk blown o'er the midnight air,
Betwixt our Lord and some who seemed not there.

ON THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION

Here, far withdrawn I stand
On the dim verge of space,
And seek My Fatherland,
And seek My Father's face.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

These veils of finitude,
Worn thin as flying foam,
No longer now exclude
My eager eyes from home.

Home to Thy breast, My God,
To-night I fain would fly,
Not stricken to the sod,
Not dying bodily;

But passing swift, unheard,
As Moses passed away
From Pisgah, like a bird
To nest at close of day;

O God, I too, I too,
Would bid Thee blot My name
Out of Thy books, if so
I might atone for them.

An altar builded high . . .
Then Israel's sheep that roam
Hear their Redeemer cry,
"Come home again, come home."

The unearthly splendor fades,
The dawn breaks, chill and wan
O'er Jesus; but the shades
He conversed with are gone.

I scarce could stand;
But Jesus took me by the hand,
"Rise," He said, "your fears are vain,
Only, till I come again

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Forth from Sheol, hold concealed
What this vision hath revealed."

Said James, "Lord, has this mystery
Aught to do with what they say
About Elijah?"

"Yea," said He;
"He returned, and now is dead.
No man knew him, not even they
Whose light whim snatched his bleeding head."

So talking, we descended
The mountain side, and wended
Our way toward our lodging. Suddenly
We came upon a gathering crowd,
And we could see
Matthew and Thomas, eyes and cheeks afire,
Standing at bay
Before three sneering Pharisees,
While near them in the mire
An old man bowed
Over an epileptic lad, who lay
In a fierce fit.

"What question ye with these?"
Cried Jesus, striding through the folk.
The old man tugged his cloak:
"Teacher, I brought my son to you.
You were gone away. He was nigh dead.
Your disciples were there. 'Heal him,' I pled;
But that was a thing they could not do,
Though they tried; so their teaching is not true.
At least that is what the Pharisees said."
"Ay, and repeat it, if you please,
To their Master's face," cried the Pharisees.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

The cheap fantastic scene rose mirage-wise
Before our sad half-seeing eyes,
So fresh from gazing on the Mount
Upon that very Fount
Of Love and Sacrifice.

And He

Hurt more a thousand times than we,
Shuddered through all His frame and turned
Toward those Scribes with eyes that burned:

“Faithless, perverse age! how long
Must I suffer all your wrong?
Ah, how long must these things be?
Bring the young lad here to Me.”

So they brought him. “If you can,
Help us,” cried the kneeling man.

“If I can? O, learn to-day
Faith takes every ‘if’ away.”

“I do have faith,” the father cried,
“And where it fails, there’s Thine beside.”

Above the swiftly gathering crowd

The imperious order rang aloud:

“Spirit deaf and dumb, depart;
Nevermore torment this heart.”

The fiend departed, flinging in his wrath

His late frail tenement,

Swooning and almost spent,

Upon the path.

But Jesus took the fragile hand,

And whispered, “Waken, lad, and stand

Upon your feet.

Life will be sweet,

And happy now for you.”

TOWARD JERUSALEM

The pale child breathed anew,
And "Abba, Abba," cried aloud,
While forth we stole in haste through the astonished
crowd.

"Master," said Matthew on the road,
"Why could we not cast it out?"
"Since you had not faith in God;
Since your hearts were sown with doubt.
Faith is packed with life, like seed:
Sow it, life from life will breed.
But sow your healing word with doubt:
You will cast no demon out.
And ere you lightly turn and cry
To yonder mount, 'Uprooted be!
And spin your summit in the sea,'
Wiser to pause and ask, 'Do I
Believe in truth Hermon can rise,
And drown herself before mine eyes?'
For demons such as gathered there
Come forth by nothing but by prayer."

That night's moon saw the earlier stage
Of this portentous pilgrimage
Toward Jerusalem.
Alas, before the stars were out,
Judas began to blame
Peter for pride, and Peter had to shout
At Judas: "I have good reason," quoth he,
"I am the Master's favorite, none may doubt."
My head spun round: "What about James and me?"
I cried. "Do not the Master's kin take rank
Above the rest of you?" This saying stank
In Peter's nostrils: "Be you kith or kin,
Of His mere flesh, my claim goes deeper in.
Who called Him Christ first?"—

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Suddenly there broke
Across the pause that followed a sweet sound
Of musing words falling from the high ground
Beyond, as to Himself the Master spoke:
 "I see . . . the Son of man . . . betrayed . . .
 Then in a grave His body laid . . .
 One day . . . another day . . . and then
 He rises up and lives again. . . ."

Cool summery dew-drops decked the grass
And stained our sandal-shoon,
But from our brows the colder dews of fear
Dripped slowly down as we did hear
Those words, and saw the Master pass
Betwixt us and the moon.

Hardly had we assembled
Within His lodging, when a Levite knocked to say
He called for the Temple tribute. Peter trembled.
His tax and Jesus' were overdue that day:
With empty purses, how were they to pay?
 "O Simon," soft He cries,
 "Children of earthly kings go free
 From taxes, how then can it be,
 Sons of the heavenly King must pay?
 Better were it all the same
 Not now to press our filial claim,
 The Levite tarries: go away
 Cast a hook into the sea;
 One fish pays for you and Me!"

Pretty it was to see how Peter's boy,
A toddling babe, climbed on the Master's knee,
Tugging His beard with careless joy,
While Jesus said:

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"My friends, tell me,
As down the road we came of late,
What was the theme of your debate?"

We were ashamed to tell;
A guilty silence fell
Upon us, till I, desperate,
Sought to divert His mind,
And told Him how, beside the gate.
We have been shocked to find
An exorcist use His name,
And had rebuked him for the same.

"Ah," said our Lord, "forbid him not:
Surely no man ever wrought
Wonders in My name, and then
Lightly turned from Me again.
Enough to-day for us to see
The man is not our enemy! . . .
But tell Me, John, what great dispute
Arose upon the homeward route?"

Again we held our tongues,
While Peter's baby played upon the floor;
And in that hush, our petty rights and wrongs
Dwindled away like boats put out from shore.

O sea, rise up and cover me!
Whither, whither shall I flee?
Christ, why dost Thou gaze on me?
How can I live and look on Thee?
"Yea, this was my dark offense:
I was claiming precedence."

Swift smiled the Son of God, and pardon played
Over His face like sunlight, when He said:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

"Within My Father's Realm the thrones
Are kept for slaves and little ones";
Then added, while He stooped and drew
The naked infant close within His breast,
Where it did meekly rest:

"Take, I say to each of you,
Naked, meek simplicity,
Happy heart to heart; behold!
This enfolding, you enfold
All I am, nay, still more near.
You fold the love which sent Me here.
This offending, you offend
The holiest thing that heaven can send;
Better far for such an one
That round his neck a great millstone
Were hung, and pitifully he
Were cast into the deepest sea.
Woe to the world for pit and snare!
Thrice woe to him who sets them there!"

God knows that I had sinned through pride,
Brother, most wantonly and grievously.
But these last words, He knows, were not for me:
They were for one whom I could see
At the room's further side
Grow pale as they were uttered, like dark night
Before the holy dawn. Ah, that, like night,
He might
Have flown away, or melted there
As horrid smoke does into harmless air.

I marked John shudder as he made that speech,
And fling his hand toward Judas, like a child

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Fain to press something far beyond his reach;
And then he left me, for his Lord had smiled
Upon him, beckoning. And I went away
Alone into a secret place to pray.

JASPER'S SECOND NARRATIVE

That evening, in the little upper room
Which Jesus hired from Peter, I found the band
Assembled silent, while He with outstretched hand
Began to speak:

 “To-morrow, lo,
Toward Jerusalem I go.
Will he follow Me or stay
Every man himself must say:
Every man who follows Me
Shoulders now a gallows-tree,
Doth his very self disown,
Follows thus, and thus alone.
Self—what is it? He who views it
Aught to cherish, will but lose it.
He who loses it for Me
Finds His soul. What treasury
In earth or heaven can pay the cost
Of one man's soul? His own soul lost,
There is no tilth in all his store
Can purchase back that soul once more.”

Each sentence now I know was planned to undress
Before their spirits' eyes deliberately
The dread to-morrow. Ah, they did not see
The naked horror He saw: among them none
There were but cried, “Master, we follow on.”

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Next day we climbed from Esdraclon's plain
Toward Ephraim, until when evening fell
We gained the beetling cliffs of Jezreel,
And there the Master rested; His great eyes
Reflected back the radiance of the skies
That canopied old Carmel. I alone
Stayed near by Him, for all the Twelve were gone
To seek for shelter.

The long hush was broken
By His twelve followers, disheveled, white:
"Master," cried James, "yon village to the right
Refused to have us! Churlish crowd! Now bid us
Call down God's fire upon their streets to rid us
Of their remembrance even." Swift He turned
Upon them, through the dusk His mild eyes burned
Like flaming stars; hot words began to hiss
Against His bolted lips, while only this
He uttered:

"Ah, ye do not know
His spirit in Whose name ye go . . ."

Then on He moved in silence, while in shame
And silence slowly after Him we came.

We dared not pry upon the darkling throng
Of thoughts that filled His mind, but trudged along
Together, seeking for a resting place
In kindlier village; only on His face
We marked the mounting light of high emprise
Stain His pale cheek, kindle His brooding eyes.
Dark upon either side the forest lay;
Nowhere a gleam of light save far away
In the hushed heavens a little starry road
Between the tree tops; what now? Jesus stood
Suddenly still, like some wild forest king

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Who found the scent he sought for; loitering
For just a moment, and then wheeling round
And back the way He came. We held our ground
But long enough to see Him out of sight;
Then we too turned to follow our sole Light;
Soon, running, we had gained on Him, while He
As though alone swept back toward Galilee.
At last, aware of His bewildered brood,
"I have changed My plan," He said. Then as He stood
In musing silence, soft in speech He broke,
While thus to our most inward ears He spoke:

HARVEST

"O the ripening harvest of hearers!
Hands that beckon like waving wheat!
Sion must wait, for the wide lands call.
Shechem will hear the voice of the shearers.
Succoth will welcome the binders' feet.
Heavy in Gilead the harvest fall.

Nay, but who will lead Me to Edom?
Who will proclaim My coming to Dan?
Have ye not seen, by the smokeless tent,
Smitten of war, or forsaken for freedom,
Harvests wait for the husbandman?
Prone he returneth, who upright went.

Mournful to mire sinks the harvest despairing,
Torrents of wintry sleet for its grave.
Richer the grain in the Kingdom, but few,
Few are the reapers. Who then will go faring
Forth over Israel to seek and to save?
Lo, now I send you by two, and by two.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Go into every village and city:
Fearfully few are ye; hasten, O haste.
Ah, ye are few, and the harvest so fain:
Pray to the Lord of the harvest to pity
Fields that are ripening, sickening fast.
Pray Him for reapers, ere reaping be vain.

There His voice breaks; I watch His olive hands
Beat back the air: "*So frail and finite I,
Yet before Me those desperate harvests lie!*"
Almost He runs; the hills are far behind.
He is God's Reaper, and His field mankind.

Late into night we hastened. Ere the day
Dawned on the abhorred gates that guard the way
Into Tiberias, her dark minarets lay
Sharp toward the South. Before we broke our fast
The reddening walls of Magdala were past.
Not unproclaimed His swift return. We moved
From house to house amid the folk He loved,
Calling them forth to South-Gennezaret;
And there by noon three hundred followers met.

Jesus gathered them around;
Stood upon a grassy mound;
Spoke: "I have to win My land
For My God: the day's at hand.
All alone I stand, but I
Have prayed to God for men to hie
Forth into the harvest. Lo!
Who will be My men, and go?"
Then He began to call us two by two
With words like swords that searched us through and
through.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

To one who came:

“The wild fox rests
Within his den, and birds have nests,
But the Son of man,” He said,
“Hath not where to lay His head.”

And to a pious son who wished to stay
At home till his old father passed away:—

“Dead men can cut the dead man’s sod:
Go thou and preach the Realm of God.”

And one reluctant follower I heard
Jesus reject with this abstemious word:

“None, having set his hand to plow
And turning back, is fit to go.”

Seventy He chose. Beneath a spreading oak
That eve we gathered round Him while He spoke.

“Little flock, your pathway lies
Midst of wolves, therefore be wise
As serpents are, yet harmless be
As the wild dove in her tree.
Put all timid fear away;
Soon the night will shine as day,
Soon the secret things of night
Be made manifest in light.
This, I tell you in the shade,
You will shout in sunny glade;
This, I whisper in your ear,
You from house-tops will declare.

And when you find a townsman kind
Eat; and heal the halt and blind;
Say, The Kingdom of heaven is come
Close to-day to this thy home.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

But when a townsman shuts the door
Against you, say, Behold we pour
Dust from our sandals toward the place
That hath put by the day of grace;
To you the Kingdom once came nigh,
But now for evermore is by.
Further, friends, I say to you,
Fear no harm that man may do:
Onward! no assassin's knife
Ever took the breath of life.
But I will forewarn you well,
One hath power to cast in hell,
After He hath slain: fear Him,
Yea, I say to you, fear Him.

Think, are not two sparrows sold
For a farthing? Frost or cold
Fells them to the ground, yet God
Marks them stiffening on the sod.
Fear not then; for ye are far
Dearer to God than sparrows are.
The very hairs upon your head
Are by your Father numbered.
Then tell your Good News: be not craven,
I will own you mine in heaven.
Be not craven, even if they
Prison you upon your way,
Judge you in their councils, flog
You in every synagogue.
Fear not, nor have previous care
For the words you utter there;
Fear not, in the crucial day
God will teach you what to say.
Fear not, for the bitter rod,
Smiting you, is smiting God.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Shall disciples dare to crave
What their Master may not have?
Can the servant's pride afford
To stand above his rightful Lord?
Honor enough if pupil be
Found in his Master's company;
Glory enough, if servant stand
As equal by his Lord's right hand.
He heareth Me that heareth you;
He scorneth Me that scorneth you.
And who scorns Me is scorning Him
To Whom I go, from whence I came."

"Master," said Andrew, "entertained by men,
Tell us how we shall pay them back again."

"He that hails you 'Heavenly sent,'
Makes his feast a sacrament,
Even though it only be
A cup of water that you see.
And this is his reward, that he
Sheltering you has sheltered Me,
And sheltering Me in his abode,
Hath made himself the host of God.

Now doth the City of God arise
Like a judgment day before Mine eyes.
On the judgment throne behold
A King, and round Him, fold on fold
Tarry the nations on His word.
Staff in hand I see Him herd
Souls like flocks to left and right,
Some to clouds of darkest night,
Some to beams of holy light.
Now at last the verdict falls
Across the silent judgment halls:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

'Ye in beams of light who stand,
Waiting My word at My right hand
Come into your own estate,
Princes of the Realm, for late
When I walked in beggar's guise
I was not hidden from your eyes.
Meat and drink ye gave Me then,
When I walked a man with men.
I was a stranger, and ye bade Me
To your tents; naked, ye clad Me.
Sick, ye came and dressed My sore,
Nor did ye shun My prison door.'

But they from whose discerning eyes
Love was not hid in Sorrow's guise
Are blinded now because Love wears
A crown, and like a judge appears.
'Lord,' they cry, 'when dost Thou think
We fed Thee when hungry, or gave Thee to drink?
We know not when we came to Thee
With such hospitality.'

And the King answering says to them:
'Truly, truly, whenever you came
To the least of these My brothers ye
Came and ministered to Me.'

And now to those whose forms have cleft
The clouds of darkness on the left,
Whispers the King, 'Depart, depart,
Ye have no haven in My heart;
For when I walked in beggar's guise
I was a beggar in your eyes;
Meat nor drink ye gave Me then
When I walked a man with men;

TOWARD JERUSALEM

I was a stranger and ye bade Me
Never to your tents, nor clad Me
While I naked roamed; My sores
Eschewed, nor pressed My prison doors.'

And they to whose cold loveless eyes
Love was not known in Sorrow's guise,
How should they know Him when He wears
A crown and like a judge appears?
'Lord,' they cry, 'when dost Thou think
We have denied Thee meat or drink?
When have we failed to visit Thee,
Or withheld our hospitality?'
And the King whispers through the gloom,
'Truly the times you did not come
To the least of those My brothers, ye -
Did not come and comfort Me.'

The children of the Kingdom rise
And vanish from that dread assize;
The sons of darkness, moving slow,
Forth from the seats of judgment go:
The first into eternal light,
The last to everlasting night."

Spellbound we listened while the mighty theme
Soared to the climax, ere He sent us forth,
(For I was chosen too, though for what worth
I do not know); He lifted up His face
To heaven and raised His hands a little space
In silent benediction. Then He moved
Away to bid farewell to those He loved
But had not chosen with the Seventy.
And while they gathered round, there rose a cry
From out the crowd, "Master, my father died

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And left no will to enforce my rights beside
My brother's: he will listen to your word,
For he has heard You speak, and calls You Lord!"—
The sudden interruption seemed to burst
Across that moment like a swirl of dust
On eyes that scanned the stars. But Jesus turned,
And listened, then like flames the slow words burned:

"Man, who has elected Me
Judge or divider over thee?
Ah, beware of coveting;
Life has better things to bring,
More than mere possessions. Late,
There lived a man of vast estate.
'What shall I do?' within himself
He plained, and stared upon his pelf.
'No more room have I to hold
All my fruits and grain and gold.
This will I do—pull down that shed,
Build some larger ones instead.
Large enough to hold the whole.
Soul (I then shall say), my soul
Thou hast many goods laid up
For many years, now fill the cup,
Feast, and follow all delight.'
Just then God said, 'Fool, this night
Thy soul shall be required of thee.
Say then whose shall these things be
Thou hast put by?' So like the stubble
In the oven, or as a bubble
Disappeared that man whose pleasure
Was compact of earthly treasure.
He sated the expiring clod,
And stinted what belongs to God.
Better to hoard in Paradise

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Deeds of love and sacrifice,
To sell your fading goods and buy
Gratitude that cannot die."

The interrupter like a wilted weed
Drooped at the crowd's edge: none took any heed
Of him again. Once more the Master's eyes
Rested upon the faces that He loved
And was so soon to leave. Closer He moved
Toward them saying:

"I go hence, and when
Or in what place we meet again,
Neither men nor angels know,
Save this, that, whether fast or slow,
The Kingdom comes, and then as they
Who gather on a wedding day
We shall foregather; until then
Watch, lest we never meet again.

Let your loins be girt about,
Never let your lamps go out.
Be yourselves like men that wait
Eager at their Master's gate;
Think you, had the goodman known
What hour the thieves were come and gone
He would have watched and saved his gear.
Watch then, lest *I* should appear
While ye slumber, and the Reign
Of heaven come nigh to you—in vain."

We Seventy went with Him, for our way
Was one, the first few hours. "Now Master, say,"
Cried Peter suddenly, "those words You spoke,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Were they meant only for the weeping folk
We left behind, or must we others too
Take our way henceforth separate from You
Until Your great return?"

"My friend,

Every beginning, every end
Is hid from us behind the bend
Of life and death; enough, if late
And early too we toil and wait:
For man's a steward, life a trust.
Is he worthy? This world's dust
Turns beneath his hand to bread
Whereby God's Kingdom may be fed.
All things serve that faithful steward
Who turns their use to serve his Lord.
Ah, but is the steward blind
To the purpose of God's mind,
Saying, 'My Lord is far away,'
Making those holy gifts the prey
Of his own carnal heat and thirst,
At last his stewardship will burst
Into hell around him. Earth,
Stripped of all her ancient worth,
Becomes the instrument of death
Unto this man, who had not faith
To see her architecture planned
From cell to spire by God's own hand.
But some are given no light to choose;
These suffer less from what they lose
Than they who sin against the light
And find themselves in fearful night.
For greater light is given to those
Whom God for greater tasks doth choose,
And he to whom great light is given
Must give a great account to heaven."

TOWARD JERUSALEM

As we drew near to Dalmanutha's gate
The dark fell swiftly. He was loath to wait,
But Peter pressed Him; so we one and all
Camped for the night without the city wall;
And while we slumbered, as to Himself I heard
The Master whisper one impatient word:

"Would that the fire which I came
To kindle were burst forth in flame!
Would that My pent-up soul might sink
To-night, to-night beneath the brink
Of this portentous sea whose tide
Creeps ever closer to My side! . . .!"

Next morn while we broke fast the Master heard
The Seventy had suffered many a word
From erstwhile friends on parting: "You forsake,"
They cried, "your homes, your kin, and lightly break
Your dear ones' hearts,"—His bread untouched He rose
And pallid stood before us in the throes
Of mental travail:

"Think ye I am come
Bringing peace to earthly home?
Nay, alas! division rather:
Henceforth you will see the father
Turn against his son; will see
Daughter and mother at enmity;
A man's worst foes, it shall be told,
Bide within his own household."

Some Pharisees were waiting by the gate
As we set out: "Teacher, we heard of late,"
They lisped, "your words of long farewell; now when,
Tell us, may we expect you back again?"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

"Hypocrites," He cried, "one day
Clouds sail from the west; straightway,
Showers are coming on, you say,
So it is. And when you see
South winds blow, you prophesy
Heat, and it comes to pass, for ye
Trace the ways of cloud and wind,
Yet refuse to look behind
Signs and portents of our day."

Confused, the pale Scribes turned and went away,
While John spat after them: "We'll pay them yet,
The spies! the dogs! Oh, we shall pay our debt!"
But Jesus:

"Rather let us mourn
Our paths so soon apart are borne,
Seeing life is but a road
For making peace with man and God.
It's short enough, and round the bend
Finds at the Judgment Bar an end.
There each man's soul at last shall be
A silent court of equity;
And always he who bears a grudge
And wears the office of a judge,
Sinks into the prison cell
Of his own hate now turned his hell."

With that word Jesus took His single way;
Soberly two by two the Seventy
Pressed on to their appointed goal. With me
Grave Joses went to Upper Galilee.
Nor did I see the Master's face again
Till many weeks of pilgriming had lain
Betwixt us and that hour. What boots it now
The roads we went, the roads we did not go?
I tell His story. Leap then to that day,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

When myriad pilgrim feet had wound their way
Toward David's city for the festival
Of Booths. Beneath the Temple's mighty wall
We stood, Joses and I, watching the stream
Of life and color in a waking dream,
Till in a trice the whole world changed; for, lo!
Between two friends we saw the Master go
Slowly toward the gate. My mind in vain
Strove to recall the taller of the twain
Who walked with Him, until those bistrained eyes
Lifted their heavy lids, and, princely-wise
Just so long as he wished, he gazed on me
Wafting me back to yon Tiberian Sea,
Upon whose yellow shore he lately stood
Warning our band of Herod, and all his brood.
This was Menahem, and I wondered much
To see our Lord, an outlaw, sib with such:
Wondered to see the delicate courtier
Choosing the dusty road and desert fare.
And while we fixed our gazes each on each
He paused by me and broke in limpid speech:

MENAHÉM'S TALE

As in an idle dream
By the marge of the sea,
Musing you may have peered
On the wreckage and withered weeds,
Fragments which life and love,
Hastening forward, have left
Torn and confused, so I peer,
Often, on that strange line
Of chipped and curious things
Set in the tide marks of Time.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

A boy-king plays at my side,
Foster brother and friend.
I am no prince,
Only a Hebrew child,
Teased, from the warm sleepy dawn
To the shivering twilight, with rules,
Precepts, and fear of the Law.
Once from a sandalwood chest
Clasped with hinges of gold,
Weeping, my mother drew forth
A Pharisee's robe,
Put fresh myrrh in its folds,
Kissed the phylactery,
Lifted a purple cloak,
Wore it a little,
Shy like a girl, and yet unaware
Of the child in the curtain's shade;
These were my dead father's robes.

Menahem was the name
Of my great-uncle, and I
Also was given that name.
Often my mother would tell
How, when Herod was young,
Menahem, one summer night,
The starlight caught in his eyes,
Solemnly laid his hands
Over the Edomite's head,
Chanting, 'Those ebony curls
Will cluster one day,
O Herod, beneath a crown!'

Herod never forgot
That hour, nor my uncle's voice,
Nor the touch of those hands on his hair.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

So while his temples still throbbed
Beneath the initial kiss
Pressed by that crown of disaster, the youth
Called for my kinsman and said,
'Thou art my chosen adviser and friend.'
Always my mother had been
Dear as the fruit of his loins
To Menahem; childless was he.
And once as she lay on her couch,
Myself three days old at her breast,
He came to her, eager and pale;
Herod had gotten a son;
But Malthace's paps were too fair,
So she proclaimed, to be bit by the brat.
All was confusion and fear,
The infant Antipas lay
Screaming with rage.
'Menahem, I am thine handmaid, and now,
So be thy master approves,
Send me the child, I will nurse him with mine.'
Thus we twain grew in one nest,
Only always for me,
And not for Antipas, rules,
Precepts, and fear of the Law.

Yet the grim mask
Sometimes was kindly withdrawn:
O the great days
When I was taken to Cherith
To visit our friends who were Essenes,
Shared in the brotherhood there,
Simple, abstemious, wholesome,
Ran on the hillsides, and sang,
Where there were none to hear,
Little songs of my own;

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Then to the vineyards came,
Watched while they tended their grapes,
Helped them to garner the wheat;
After the rich stagnant life of the court,
Hunger was joy,
Weariness bliss,
Yet without Antipas there,
Ever I fretted and pined.

Once in a dream I saw
A little room, and there sat
A spirit at either end.
One had a dulcimer,
One had a ten-stringed harp.
He with the dulcimer played
A melody sensuous, slow,
He with the ten-stringed harp
Played on another key,
A thin high tune;
Sometimes they played alone;
What infinite sweetness of sound;
Sometimes, together;
Discords tattered the air.
That was a dream of my life at the court,
For when the Baptist swept
Like a hurricane over the plain,
I was of those who heard.
Hitherto good and ill
Slept secure in my soul,
Now I saw them at war;
And when the Master came
Comet-like into my ken,
Fiercer the battle grew,
All my heart was a-din,
Yet I could not discern,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

There at my window, starlit,
Could not discern on the page
Of my life, which letters were ill,
Which, if any, were good.

Once at dawn
I raised my hot eyes to the east,
All the sky was a sea
Of darkness and blood.
Slowly its forecourts revealed
The palace of Herod the Great
Hung in the desert sky,
Like a scapegoat, cleft and exposed.

Behold,
All the sins of the world,
Named, and nameless to me
There I saw;
All that was hidden beneath
Their ziziths of Lydian silk,
Their handsome phylacteries,
These were but scabs on the sore
Of an evil community;
And my darling, my Antipas,
Twin of my heart, who had worn
Round him the veils of my worship and love,
Himself the heart of the sore:
Moaning, from that dark awaking, I waked.

Then to the dread crossroad
With a seemingly casual nod, I was called.
You have heard of Chuza, and how
Jesus restored his child:
I stared upon Chuza drunk
With that unbelievable joy,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And said, I will see for myself;
And stole from the palace gates.
There He stood on the shore
Speaking, and while He spoke
The raveled coil of my life
Slowly took promise of form,
Beauty, and order and peace.

I know how a lover's heart,
Drawn within the spell
His lady weaves, becomes glad.
Far more was my fain heart glad,
As slowly, surely, it drew
Within the encompassing love
Of Jesus of Nazareth.

Meanwhile one day in the palace,
A mislaid paper exposed—
Over Herod's own seal—
A horrible plot to destroy
Him Whom we love. Long ago
In a field as a child I found
A great shining beetle; he lay
Admired in my palm until, faugh!
My eye caught his belly: you know what I saw.
So Herod's court at a stroke,
Everything, everyone, seethed like yon pest.
That was the day I came
Over the sands to your boat,
Whispered my warning to Jesus and fled.

Chuza's wife, that very night, told
Of the Galilean farewell,
Told of the sending forth
Of the seventy heralds, and told,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Of a dream which they said that He had
To conquer Jerusalem.
Then I feared for Him much,
Desperate hours I brooded
How I might save Him.

Then I sent Nathan and Boaz,
Bidding them warn Him well:
Bidding them tell the tale
Of the massacred Galileans.
Had you not heard thereof?
Pilate was taking the tribute gold
From the Temple coffers to pay
For the Roman aqueduct;
But those Galileans withstood
His thieves: 'It was meant for God,
Not for Cæsar,' they hissed.
Straightway the swords of Rome
Flashed, and their angry blood
Flowed on the altar steps.

Now Jesus too
Will lead a rebellion, I thought;
And alas, too long had I been
A courtier in Herod's halls
To retain in my heart one hope
Of Messiah for Israel.
Therefore I feared for Him,
For I thought His harbingers bore
Torches of revolution and blood.
But the answer He gave to my friends
Showed me how far I had erred.

"Why should any care to cherish
His own life? He cannot perish

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Whom penitence hath purged within
From the cankerworm of sin.
These Galileans Pilate slew
Perchance had cleaner hearts than you :
Judge not, but read God's warning sent
To each of you, '*Repent, Repent.*'

Or those eighteen on whom the tower
Of Siloam fell, and took their hour
Of life midway, ah, do not cry
'They sinned so much the worse than I.'
Gaze rather on God's warning sent
To each of you, *Repent, Repent.*'

For you and they were given a place
Within the garden of God's grace.
There His Mercy patiently,
Though thou art but barren tree,
Tarries, tending thee with care,
Sighing, 'Still those boughs might bear,'
Weeping, 'O my barren tree,
Give thy tears for fruit to Me!'"

Nathan my messenger
Chanting those solemn words,
Gazed on my face,
Plainly as speech his eyes said,
Thou art that barren tree!
Ah Nathan, mine own troubled heart
Whispered the same to me.

Who was I to condemn
The court,—I living at ease
In the midst of that opulent death?
Ah, but to see Him and hear Him once more!

TOWARD JERUSALEM

As though my burning desire
Had drawn Him, to Hamath He came,
Preaching and healing: the whole synagogue
Buzzed with invalid folk:
The chief ruler raged when bench after bench
Filled with the halt and the blind:
This is the Sabbath! he cried.
But Jesus, answering said,
"Surely, surely, you forget
Life's not a stage with puppets set
Neatly for you to pull the strings!
Love on each occasion brings
Its own procedure. Love commands
'Loose your ox, your ass's bands!'
Then is it sin if I unwind
Bands old Satan's imps did bind
Eighteen years ago around
Abram's daughter, while you sound
Your silver trumpets?"

His chin held high in the air
The ruler quitted the church,
A rustling wave
Whispered across the crowd,
Then with a single sweep
Wheeling, like birds in flight,
Every face turned to Him:
Master, we hunger for more!
So He told us two tales;
The second one, piercing and searching,
Probed my soul to the quick.
Here was Jesus, the Leader
Of only a handful of folk,
Saying that soon
That tiny seedling would tower

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

In air, a magnificent tree.
And then—for my seething soul
Did earth hold a word more apt?
Jesus' new leaven of truth,
Pushing its lively way
Through the profitless meal
Of disillusion, disgust.
Was Jesus to win my soul?
Could it be as it had not been,
My pampered luxurious past,
Every evasion, excuse,
All be forgotten for good?

Next day,
Someone upon the street
Said to Him, Lord are there few,
Meant to be saved? And He cried:
"Wide the gate and broad the way
Leading to death, many there be
Walking therein, because the gate
Leading to life is very strait:
Strait the gate and steep the way;
Strive to enter in to-day . . .
Soon the Master must arise,
Shut the door before your eyes,
And when you stand without and say,
'Open, Lord, to us, we pray,'
A Voice will answer as from far,
'I know you not from whence you are.'
And you protesting say, 'Lord, Lord,
Have we not eaten at Thy board?
In our streets Thou hast taught, and we
In Thy name did prophesy,
Cast out devils in Thy name,
Wrought many wonders in Thy Name!'

TOWARD JERUSALEM

But, He, I tell you, will declare,
'I know you not from whence you are,
I know you not, depart from Me,
Workers of iniquity.'

Behold from north, south, east, and west
They gather to that royal feast.
Ah, there shall bitter weeping be,
And gnashing teeth, when you shall see
Abram, Isaac, Jacob stand
With all the prophets in the Land
Of God, and you yourselves outcast. . . .
There, last are first, and first are last."

Thus He ended, but I,
Ere He stepped from the bema, was won.

But ah, on decision's heels
Testing tarried, thin-lipped.
Herod, but yesterday,
Jealous of Jesus,
Whispered into mine ear,
"That prophet must go. . . ."

Nay, if still in my heart
There was hospitality given
To one frail hesitant thought,
It was slain at a blow
By His answer, so icily cold,
So icily daring—Zeus!
They tell me He smiled as He spoke:
"Go ye to that fox and say
I have not time to die to-day.
Three days must I exorcise
And heal, but since a prophet dies

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

In Jerusalem by rights,
I work by day and walk o' nights!"

Suddenly then in my heart
Which had been like a festal room
Curtained, and lighted, and warmed,
A door blew open, a wind
Shook the tapers, while I
Whispered *Ave* to Jesus,
Antipas, vale, vale!
With Him now to the end!

A while in my innermost heart,
Lest unripe, I hid my resolve.
Then to my house in Hamath He came.
I bade my friends whom I loved:
Ah, though they knew it not,
That night I was bidding farewell
To them, to a life once rich,
Substantial and fair, but now
Wearing the aspect of dreams.
And lo, while we feasted, there came
Townsfolk bearing a dropsical man:
He had bathed in Hamath in vain;
Now from Jesus sought health;
Why did he come on the Sabbath day?
We who were Pharisees fain
Would have bade him depart, yet I swear
The very presence of Jesus
Made that most pious thought
Mean and grotesque; then He spoke:
"Is it lawful, do ye say,
That I should heal on Sabbath day?"

TOWARD JERUSALEM

I fidgeted there in my place,
But the Master had left His couch;
Silent and pale He stood
Grasping the invalid man
By the shoulder—I know not how long—
For the measure of silence like that
Is intensity rather than time.
Only I know that after a space
Shouting and laughter arose;
Now by Jehovah's throne,
Jesus has healed him! but He
Beckoned them forth to the door,
And said: "Praise ye the Lord of Heaven,
Rather than swear by His throne!"
Then to my side He came
And, holding my hand, looked round
Smiling on our concern:

"Which of you whose ox or ass
Had fallen into some morass
Would not pull him out straightway
Though it were the Sabbath day?
Menahem, you sit and frown
At a world turned upside down,
Smile rather, seeing how God can
Honor and heal an humble man.
This has been like a wedding feast
Where the lowliest and least
Was greatliest honored: meek he sat
Next the door, upon his mat;
Then to him came the seneschal
Before the eyes of one and all:
'My lord bids you rise and come
To yonder more exalted room;
Sirs, give way, I do request

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

For this most distinguished guest.
Ah, none need leave his silken chair,
He would not choose to languish there!
He is gone forth, but we who stay
Know that he sups with God to-day,
While we of more considered fame
Sup only with you, Menahem."

We rose then, and Jesus passed
His arm through mine, and we strolled
Together across the flag
Of the old courtyard, while He said:
"How they scramble for the seats
Of honor, and the choicest meats!
And what reward have you, in fine,
Save, in your turn, with them to dine?
Why not, sir, when you give a feast,
Leave your rich cousins, and the rest,
Invite, like God, the maimed, the blind,
These cannot, though they had a mind,
Reward you in this house of dust,
They wait the rising of the just."

Now as we walked, we reached
A fountain, and standing there
My cousin Aaron, rich,
And pious as well, but alas!
He too is dropsical.
And he looked at Jesus and said,
While jealousy peered through his lids,
"Yon is a happy man
Who sups to-night, as you say,
With God in the kingdom of heaven!
Why did you heal *him*, Rabbi?
The man was not even a guest,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Only a mere offscouring
Out of the streets."

Then said Jesus:

"A certain man prepared a feast,
Bade many, and sent his slave in haste,
Saying to them that were bidden, 'Come,
All things are ready now in my room.'

Then they all at once began

Excusing themselves: 'Now I hardly can,'

Said one, 'as I bought some ground to-day,

And must go and see it, excuse me, I pray.'

'I have bought a yoke of oxen and go,'

Said another, 'to prove them: it must therefore be
No.'

'I have married a wife so I cannot come,'

Another replied: then the servant came home.

'Go quick,' cried his master, 'bring halt, maimed
and blind

To my banquet instead!' 'Lord, all I could find

I have brought,' said the servant, 'and yet there is
room.'

Said the lord then, 'Go out and compel them to come

From the highways and hedges, this you must do

That my house may be full, for I say unto you,

Of all those men that were bidden, not one

Shall taste of my supper.' And so it was done."

Next day after the feast

Great crowds bade Him farewell;

Round Him they heaved and swayed

As troubled waves of the sea

Surge round the unswerving prow.

Yea, like the furrowing prow of a ship,

Steadfast His face was set

Toward Jerusalem.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And they who surged in His path,
What did they hope for? Some
Followed a will-o'-the-wisp,
Thought they followed a king,
Saw the crown in His hand,
And His foot on the steps of a throne.

I too follow that face
To the verge of the world, but I know
That from here to the outermost rim
Of the realm of the nations, no space
Will be found for the sole of His foot;
That from now to the last of His years,
Should He live till those ivory brows
Grow wrinkled and hoary with eld,
No visible diadem
Shall adorn their majestic calm.
For the kingdom of God is within
The hearts of the children of men.

Nevertheless the shock
Of those piercing arrows of speech,
Turning many away,
Shook me and searched my soul:
"Ye who follow Me to-day
Turn each tender gaze away
From father, mother, children, wife,
Brother, sister, yea, from life—
Life itself: who follows Me
Shoulders now a gallows tree.
Ah, but *would* ye serve Me, come
Follow Me, and where I am
There too will My servant stay.
For He who follows Me to-day

TOWARD JERUSALEM

In this Mine hour of bitter sorrow
Will know My Father's smile to-morrow."

By a weed-grown vineyard He paused:
Over its tumbled walls,
Blankly with empty eyes,
Stared an unfinished tower—
The laughingstock of the town;
And for certain He knew the tale.
A wan smile flitted across
His face, and again He spoke:

"Do not imagine those My words
Careless fall, as hungry birds
Spill at random husks of corn;
Every syllable is born
Of travailing thought; for hour by hour
I sat, like one who builds a tower
In dreams; but ere he lay one stone
Counts out with many a careful moan
The final cost, lest haply he
Lack the wherewithal to see
The thing complete. 'This clever man,'
The gazing crowd will cry, 'began
To build a tower, but had not wit
Or had not gold to finish it.'
Yea, hour by hour, like some lone king
I sat; for who would dare to fling
His armies forth against a foe
Whose counter-strength he did not know?
What king would care to beg for terms
Or ere the hosts had come to arms?
But hark! I counted out the cost,
The Heavenly Country is not lost,
If each who taketh now My path
Forsaketh everything he hath.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Cleave to Me, and cleave to pain,
Quit Me, quit the heavenly Reign."

Like the mesh of a riddle, His words
Shook some timid ones forth.
Fear was scored on their brows.
Homeward they turned.

On in silence we trudged;
Under our feet there broke
Some chalky marl which the slaves
Of a fish-curer, come from the marts
Of Tarichæa, had spread
Over the path.

"Nothing left to burn and cleanse,
All the salt is gone from hence;
But now within your souls this fire
Of discipline shall purge desire
Of self, like living salt, and Pain
Shall hasten in the heavenly Reign."

Only a handful now
Followed Him down the road.
Suddenly I was aware
Of His gaze like a strong sunbeam
Blazing upon my face.

There on the road I knelt:
"Master," I said, "Thou hast won;
I am ready, I follow now."
Silent He stood, but I knew,
When I looked in His eyes, that His speech
Was holden for very joy.
Brother, would you or I
So rejoice for one soul
Turning again to God?

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Slowly we plodded on.
Jesus had linked His arm
In mine. "Ah, Master," I said,
"I am sorely perplexed.
You spoke last night at my feast
Concerning the poor, and you said,
These were the folk to befriend.
But how entertain without gold?
And have you not also said,
Lay not up treasure on earth,
But lay up your treasure in heaven?
Man cannot, You told us, serve Mammon and God."
He sighed, and then on the path
He halted, and gazed on the soul
Which is hid by this body I wear
From the eyes of the rest of the world:
"When 'Renounce your wealth' I say,
I do not mean fling it away.
Rather hold it dear, to spend
Not on self, but on a friend;
Rather keep it, but to buy
Love in hearts that do not die.

I met a rich man yesterday:

'Why,' quoth I, 'is your face so gay?'

'Ha, ha! a clever rogue,' quoth he,

'I paid him off for larceny.

But my wily steward had not a friend

In the world save me, and, I lost, he must send

For each debtor on the estate,

Wipe half his debts clean off the slate,

So made friends with all the batch.

Every door is on the latch,

Every housewife gives him wine,

Meat, and bed, and linen fine.'

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Ah, Menahem, in his small affairs
A worldly rogue better prepares
Himself against a teasing plight
Than do the children of the light.
Yet though he doth himself prepare
When small disasters start and stare
Full in his face, the child of earth,
At ease within his house of mirth,
Forgets that in the realms beyond
No treasure saving love is found.
Dives sat in splendid state;
Lazarus languished at his gate,
Hungered for the crumbs that fell
From Dives' heaven to his hell.
Then came Death, and in the dance
He played, of cosmic circumstance,
Hell and heaven changed their place:
Lazarus slumbered with his face
Hid in Abram's bosom, while
Dives staggered down an aisle
Of coiling flame. Oh, poor fain fool,
To fling thy lost all now to cool
Thy tongue one instant in this heat,
Hadst thou once taught *his* heart to beat
With but a little love, who fast
On Abram's bosom sleeps at last,
I think he would have stirred even there,
Awakened by thy bitter prayer;
I think the awful gulf which lies
Betwixt him and thine agonies,
Hadst thou but loved him, had been spanned
At thy first moan, by Lazarus' hand."

As He ended, the uppermost rim
Of the moon hove over the hills;

TOWARD JERUSALEM

And none of us uttered a word
Till the whole bright disc hung aloft
Over Midian's tents. . . .
. . . What are these, what are these?

THE TEN LEPERS

O what are these that thinly wail
Beside the waters of Bethshan?
What ghosts are these that thinly wail?
"Unclean! unclean!" they cry.
Nearer they glide, they cross the ford,
They follow us, now on the sward
The little brood kneels: "Pity, Lord,
Have pity, Lord," they sigh.

They gather round Him in the dusk
Beneath the black cliffs of Bethshan.
They gather round Him in the dusk,
O, is He turned to stone?
Stockstill He stands, and then His eyes
Uplift their lids, "Begone!" He cries,
"And show you to the priests; arise,
Begone, begone, begone."

Did ever such a silence fall
By night or day on dark Bethshan—
Did ever such a silence fall?
It seemed almost to me
The waves that gossiped down the ford
Ceased for a moment, at that word,
From babbling, to adore their Lord.
In silent ecstasy.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

But, ah, they looked and knew no change
There by the waters of Bethshan.
Each leper looked and knew no change
On any ghastly limb,
Though their meek hearts yet heard the sound
Of that command, tranquil, profound,
Which chased them down like faithful hound
The road decreed by Him.

So, shuddering, they crept away
Across the ford beneath Bethshan.
With shuddering moans they crept away,
But Jesus silent stood;
With lifted hands He stood apart
And summoned from His Father's heart
Lightnings of healing love to dart
Upon that pilgrim road.

O, brotherhood of misery—
And not alone in dark Bethshan—
O, brotherhood of misery,
Ye know the roads to rove.
And whither else should wretchedness
Lead men to ease their sore distress,
Save where God's very feet do press
Upon the paths of Love?

And many a time the Master's face,
'Twixt Galilee and dark Bethshan,
And many a time the Master's face
Like a spirit's face had shone;
But never had it burned so bright
Before, as when His healing might
Surged from His soul's last deeps that night,
And chased those lepers on.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

And while they went they cleansèd were,
Amid the thickets of Bethshan.
Lo, while they went they cleansèd were
By pity's healing darts.
For though they, faltering, wavering, wound
Their way across the marshy ground,
Those lightning forks of pity found
Obedience in their hearts.

But only one of all the ten
Came running back toward Bethshan—
Only one man of all the ten—
Across that starlit field,
Leaping and shouting came, and fell
At Jesus' feet and tried to tell
His thanks, and so his soul as well
As his poor flesh was healed.

.

While Menahem spoke Jesus had stolen away
Within the Temple courts, but still there came
With us that other one, Joseph his name
Of Arimathæa, and while Menahem
Fondled each recollection like a gem
And laid it down before us, till his tale
Was all complete, we wended through the vale
Of Kidron and so came to Joseph's gate.
He led us in; on his wide roof we sate
Beneath a booth built by his little son,
Of branches, for that feast was now begun.

At sundown Joseph's dame appeared and brought
Maidens with her that carried dishes wrought
In gold and silver full of fruits and wine.
With simple grace she bade us stay and dine,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

For Menahem's tale was ended, and I stood
Upon my feet. "Nay, brother, it is good
You tarry longer with us; do not go,"
Said Joseph. Menahem added, "You would know
Why we twain were with Jesus there to-day;
Joseph can tell you if you will but stay."

JOSEPH'S NARRATIVE

I, like Menahem here,
Was nested, in childish days,
Soft, like a fledgling bird
Whose parents have builded their nest,
Sheltered, sunny, remote.
And that is all that I ask
Of Fate, that it give to us
What is given the birds,
Sunshine, shelter, and peace;
The rest is contained within.
My parents were Hasidim,
They were "Quiet in the Land,"
Tarrying for the dawn.
I too cherished that hope.
To Beth-ha-midrash I went:
There I studied the law,
Studied, and dreamed, and slept,
Heedless of night or of day.

When, but a youth, I was made
Member of Sanhedrin,
One of my earliest dreams
Budded, and later it broke
To bloom, when they gave me a seat
In the inner ring of the court.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Rumors haunted us then
Persistent from Galilee
Of a prophet arisen there.
Once and a second time,
Embassage went from our court,
Spying upon Him, and saw
How He broke with the hounds
Of the Law, and renounced the way
Of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Then we resolved to hold
The bitter dividing blade
Of evidence. I was sent
In person with other two.
"Question the fellow," they said,
"Concerning the laws of divorce."

Traveling up the Ghôr,
We came to Pella, the place
Near where John had baptized.
There on a day of storm
We came upon Him in the house.
Four Galilean youths—
His brothers, I think—were there
Challenging Him to go
To the holy city to keep
The feast—the feast of the Booths
Which brought us hither to-day.
Strange to me were His words,
Stranger the Man Himself.

"Thither, when you will, you roam,
But My time is not yet come."

Slowly His brothers withdrew
Turning their heads as they went

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Toward us resentfully;
While we, with beating hearts,
Bowed to Jesus and said,
"Rabbi, how dost Thou say:
Given a cause, may a man
Lawfully part from his wife?"

As one who is sure of his ground,
Steadfastly Jesus replied:
"Moses saw ye had declined
From the purpose of God's mind.
Spirits dull and senses coarse
Received the respite of divorce."

After my friends had gone
I sought Him again by myself,
Fain to be with Him alone;
But the disciples were there.
Talking of us they asked
Further concerning the laws
Of divorce which Moses had given.
• Sighing deeply, He spoke:
"The holy state of man and wife
Is welded by the law of life,
Not by the rules of man. And such
As suffer stranger hands to touch
That shrine proclaim themselves to be
Living in adultery."

"Master, Master," they cried,
"Surely your dreams of the love
Of a man and a woman are spun
Finer than mortal hand
Dare to cherish or hold."

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"I speak alone of what God meant
When He ordained this sacrament.
God never planned a middle gate
Between the holy married state
And virgin life; for many a one
It may be best to live alone.
Within this circle, sweet and dread,
Others there are, whom Love hath led.
For there are those to whom it is given,
Whole and clean, to enter heaven,
Even while the gate stands wide
For many another one beside.

Enters one who shuts his eyes
To loveliness, lest there arise
Something foul from something fair
To drag his spirit elsewhere:
Better to see, with sin forgiven,
By one eye the half of heaven
Than, with the other eye as well,
To gaze upon the whole of hell.

And there goes one, redeemed, forgiven,
Homeward through the gate of heaven,
Never to fulfill the dream
Perfect, in God's own mind, for him;
Maimed he goes, since his right hand
Refused to build what God had planned,
Yet he enters in, for he
Disallowed his treachery,
Gave the smouldering rubbish heap
His hand, and not himself, to keep.

And there a cripple goes, whose feet
In earlier days, were fair and fleet;

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Alas! they only took him toward
The tents of sin, till his own sword
Smote them off; and now forgiven
Yet incomplete, he enters heaven."

There was the muddied cup
Of my musings on spirits and flesh
Cleared by this alchemist,
In a trice, through these magical drops
Of speech, and lo! at the foot
Of the crystalline cup I beheld
God's divinest of gifts,
To mortals, the innocent pearl
Of the love of a man and his wife.

Nay, and deeper than all
His marvelous words, I perceived
Cords that drew me to Him,
Spun from His very soul.
For ever behind the dust
And tangle of parchment lore
Wherein for long I had strayed,
The hope of my youth had burned—
Was it more than mere hope?—that I,
Joseph, should find the Christ.
Suddenly, as I stood
Beside Him, I knew I was His.
Crying aloud I fell
At His feet, then He spoke, "I am sent
To bring in the Kingdom of God.
I go to Jerusalem
To win or to lose, but you,
Joseph, will *you* bear a part
In the great campaign? Will you be
My witness in Sanhedrin?

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Nicodemus is Mine;
You are his friend, come with him."
So I joined Him, and came
With Him here to the feast.

Once in the city, all eyes
Fastened on Him, and the crowds
Followed Him: Solomon's Gate
Choked with the crush: the police
Tried to arrest Him, their plea—
"Causing obstruction"; but Jesus:
"Yet a little while I stay
With you, then I go away
Home to Him who sent Me; ye
Searching then, shall not find Me:
Where I am ye cannot be."

To some that word was no more
Than a pledge to withdraw from the town;
To some it was fraught with tears. . . .
There came a night when I stood
With Him on the rocky path
That leads to the Temple Gates
From the Pool of Siloam. The last,
The greatest day of the feast
Was dying as all days die.
Priest after priest moved past,
Bearing the pitchers of gold
Filled with water to pour
Over the altars of God,
Chanting these words as they went:

The day is at hand, when with joy
You shall dip your pitchers within
The waters of Safety and shout
An anthem of praise to your Lord.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Render Jehovah thanks—
Ye shall sing—and call on His name,
Lift up His name and make known
To the peoples all He hath done.

Sing of His glorious works
In all the ways of the world,
Let Sion's citizens sing
For the Holy One dwells in her house.

Jesus hearing them turned,
Followed, and lo! within
The courts of the Temple He stood
Crying aloud to the folk:

“Ho, if any man there be
Thirsty, let him come to Me:
I will give him drink, for I
Thirst for them that thirsty sigh.”

Round Him the people pressed.
Gorgeous amid the blue
And purple curtains of night
The candelabra of gold
Glittered and swam, but how strange!
Only a few girls danced
Where many were wont to be,
Holding their torches high
Before that altar of light—
Only a few and soon
They also had stolen away.

“I am the Light of the world
Follow Me, follow, follow.”
These were the words that shone
In His eyes for all men to read.

TOWARD JERUSALEM

"He that followeth Me
Follows the Light of Life!"

There in the dusk He towered.
Round about Him like sheep
Huddled the people; to me
He seemed like some shepherd come down
From the heights of Olympus, half-god,
Half a brother of men
Seeking and saving the lost.
As in a dream I stood;
Was it dreaming or waking I heard
The shepherd calling his sheep?

"My sheep hear My voice:
I know them: they follow Me.
I give them eternal life
So they shall never die,
Neither shall any man
Pluck them out of My hand:
He who gave them to Me,
My Father, is greater than all:
No one is able to pluck
Aught from My Father's hand.

Truly I say unto you
He that entereth not
Into the fold by the door
But climbs up some other way,
He is a robber and thief.
But he that entereth in
By the door is a shepherd of sheep;
The porter opens to him;
All the sheep hear his voice.
He calleth his own by name

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Leading them out of the fold.
When he puts forth his sheep,
He goes before, and they follow
Seeing they know his voice.
Strangers they will not follow :
They know not the voice of strangers."

.

In the chilly dawn, I awoke.
The city was wrapt in sleep.
Shivering I arose,
Hush, O echoing feet,
Softly, disturb Him not.
Lo, by the city wall
A shadow, a dirge-like sound,
A sense of the Spirit of God.

"I was glad once when I came
Within your walls, Jerusalem.
Once I dreamed, those feet might stay
In your palaces alway.—
Built on Peace—Is that your name?
Alas, alas, Jerusalem,
You are built upon the bones
Of the saints you stoned with stones.
O Jerusalem, I came
To you, you cruel foster-dame,
Sought my children, found them not
(You had hid them) ; long I sought
Like a mother-hen that seeks
With nestling wings to hide her chicks.
Naught are you now but brick and stone,
Desolate, for we are gone."

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Turning, He saw me then;
"Lord, come and break your fast
Now, at my table," I said.
Silent, He took my arm,
Came with me, as in a dream.

JASPER'S THIRD TALE

Here Joseph paused, and I, ashamed to note
How late it was, rose, took my leave of him,
Hied home, and wrote down, till the stars grew dim,
All I had heard. Next day I sat alone
On Sion's topmost height, where she looks down
Upon Siloam: not long alone I stayed
Ere Jesus, passing, paused, and friendly, laid
His hand upon my arm, saying, "Will you go
Now with Me, brother, down to Jericho?"

I much rejoiced because alone I went
With Him a spell, but hardly had we bent
Beyond Damascus' antique gates, or ere
A little company of folk drew near
With shining faces, singing as they came.
Some of the Seventy these, their hearts aflame
With burning tales of love to tell their Lord.
An hour we sat together on the sward.
Once Philip said: "The very devils be
Subject to us, the while we call on Thee!"

Then said Jesus, "I descry
Satan fallen from on high,
Even as lightning, nathless, friend,
Waste no laughter o'er his end,
Laugh when your sins are forgiven,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Your name in the books of heaven.
Happy the eyes that see the things
You see; I tell you many kings,
Yea, and prophets sought in vain
To see the things you now see plain.
Kings and prophets vainly sought
To hear the things you have been taught."

We left the city gate at dawn of day,
And went to Pella, traveling from thence
Throughout Peræa . . . ever more intense
And urgent grows His message. But sometimes
He wanders off alone; see how He climbs
That grassy knoll to-night; no one is nigh:
He lingers there. Ah, there in days gone by
His mighty cousin stood like living flame
Preaching repentance in Jehovah's name.
And Jesus in these by-gone crucial days
Likewise had stood beside the parting ways,
And made His vows to God. Now clear and cool
Behind the trees there gleams the sacred Pool
Of Baptism; His heart is all aflame
With mighty courage, now the great emprise
Is close at hand, but still His ardent eyes
Are kindled from within, and when there came
Ironical querists from the Sanhedrin:
"When, Rabbi, is your Kingdom coming in?"
He answered:

"Do not think that ye
Can see the heart by what you see
Upon the surface, turn your eyes
Within, for there the Kingdom lies."

That night He left us and went out alone;
At dawn we found Him, motionless, withdrawn,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Beside the Jordan. When at last He heard
Our troubled words, He came across the sward
Eager and strong:

“The time’s at hand:

Courage, friends! The time’s at hand.

And when in days to come the fire

Kindles in you of vain desire

Once more, as in old days, to be

Gathered round the room with Me,

Then if any man will say

‘Lo! I saw your Christ to-day,’

Heed him not, for there shall rise

False Christs and work before your eyes

Signs and wonders such as might

Dupe the very sons of light.

There, I warn you, so, if they

Come enticing you and say

‘He is in the desert,’ bide

Where you are; yet by your side

At length like lightning forks that stride

From East to West, I Jesus will

Be with you: the Great Floods did spill

Their waters o’er the world less fast

Than I shall find you at the last.

Then safe like Noah you shall ride

Upon a far serener tide.

Less fast the fires on Sodom fell,

Chasing her sinners into hell,

Than I shall race at your dread hour

To you, beloved. Then, like Lot,

The flames of death shall scarce be hot

Upon your back ere you shall find

With Me all sorrow far behind.

Forth alone from earth you fare,

But when you come, I will be there.”

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Later came friends from Bethany to say
Lazarus pined, and soon must pass away.

"Let us go," said Jesus then,

"Into Judah once again."

But Pella loved Him, and when next day He made
To leave the town, came singing down the glade
All the boys and girls; and mothers too,
Carrying their babes. Did any ever view,
Before or since, an idyll quite so fair?
And yet His friends were vexed that they should dare
To flutter round their Master in that dark
Portentous hour. "Dismiss them," cried they. "Hark!
He is not sending them away!" Saith He:

"Suffer them to come to Me.

Do not forbid them now, for even

Such are the citizens of heaven.

I tell you truly, if to-day

I should turn My face away

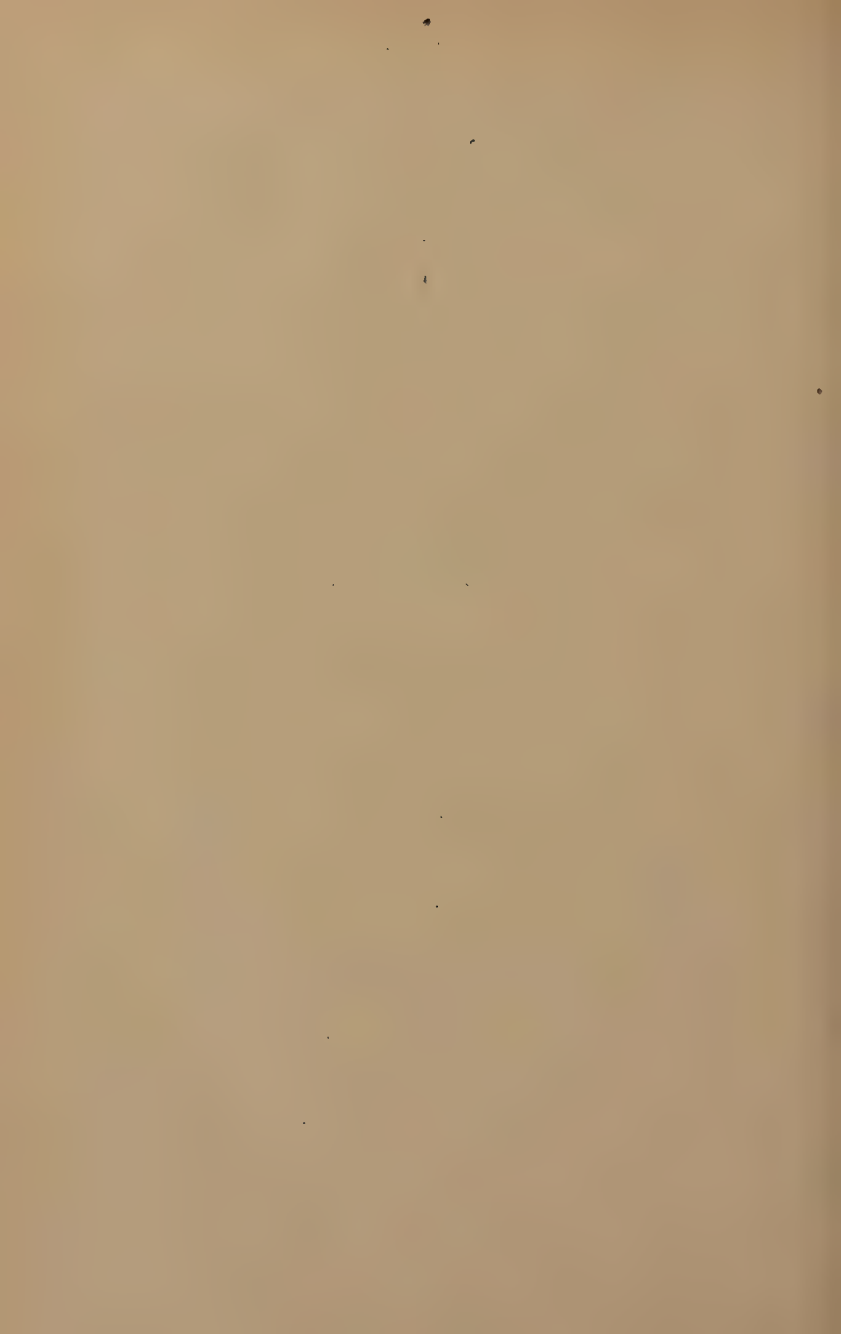
From these little ones, I should

Turn from the Kingdom of My God."

Then to me He came, and bade me wait
In Pella till He summoned me; but late
He lingered with me, taking long farewell,
And promised He would give me power to tell
Later, in childlike simple ways, those things
That I had seen and heard. By Pella's springs
I tarried, mused, and wrote. Jesus moved on
To Lazarus' home. I thought that He was gone
A short while only, from me; hope how vain!
I never looked upon His face again.

BOOK III

The Passion



Two weeks I tarried, till the smouldering fire
 Which was my longing to be with Him, leapt
 Full into flame, and forth I fared; I slept
 One night in Jericho, next day I came
 With dark forebodings, to Jerusalem.
 There in Gethsemane, Mary I found
 Weaving a garland, her long hair unbound,
 And wildness in her eyes; and if she knew
 Who greeted her, I know not; but while she threw
 Her lilies down the Kidron, soft she spoke
 More to herself than me:

MARY'S SECOND NARRATIVE

I sometimes think

Our life in Bethany is a dream dreamed
 In a strange tongue, beneath strange skies, but often
 There come bright spells of waking, and I hear
 Low, friendly voices in my little room,
 And past the door the heavenly sunlight falls
 On the dear flowers of Home, the scented flowers
 Straying into the garden of this dream
 From unremembered eras of delight;
 And music comes touched from no earthly lyre;
 And tones of speech, or something in a deed,
 A grave unearthly grace: Lazarus knows
 This strangeness too: brave Martha does not know.
 Her roots are in the rocks, but we are both
 Frail vines that feel out toward some hidden prop
 Behind things seen: Lazarus is often sick;

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

And now I seldom climb the hilly path
To uncle Simon's house. I'm glad my sister
Is not as we are: there's a power within her
To weave a spell about our span of exile
Until it sometimes almost seems like Home.
My Lazarus loves her too for this: he says
Her solid, placid, practical, kind ways
Saved him from madness once.

It began that night
When last He stayed with us in Bethany;
And He and Lazarus talked till almost dawn—
I heard their voices as I lay in bed—
And next day Lazarus went away alone
And stayed for many days. And when he came
To Bethany again, I hardly knew
My brother. O he was kind before, and dear,
And had a lovely face, but not like this;
This was the light that I had dreamed to see
Upon my mother's face at the Last Day,
The Light of Resurrection. So it was
With Lazarus, for he told me he had died
Out on the hills there, burnt up in the flame
Of the love of Christ which looked on his soul laid bare,
And loved him still; and now he was dead, dead,
But cared not, since he lived in Him. Two weeks
My brother went in this still ecstasy,
Nor ate nor drank of the good things Martha made.
And though the Master was away, I seemed,
In Lazarus' presence, sitting at His feet.
But then the glory faded, and there crept
Over our home a menacing black cloud.
I dreamed I saw the Master crucified,
And told my dream to Lazarus, and he wept
Like a small child, for he had dreamed the same!

THE PASSION

Then his old malady took him, and he raved,
And I could never soothe him, but Martha knew
Which herbs to give; she did not talk of dreams,
But held him in her comfortable way
Upon the healing paths of sleep and quiet.

Hardly had he lain sick a week, when one
Came running to the house with, "Jesus is come
And Simon bids your brother to sup to-night
With Him." So Lazarus rose, and washed, and dressed
And said, *I will go and bid my Lord farewell!*
And then it seemed that even Martha knew,
For all at once her face was turned to stone,
And the brave girl who, when our mother died,
Had never wept, burst into sudden tears.

.

Since ever I was a child I had loved gold,
And kept all of my father's portion hid
Unspent against some hour I knew would come
When I should need it at last. How hard it seemed,
And useless for my Lord; yet now I knew
The hour was come. O scent of summer flowers,
O paradisal fragrance of rich scents
Of Araby and Ind, ye shall remind
My dearest Lord of the land from whence He came,
And bring to Him in this most dreadful hour
A message from the fields of heaven! Ye shall
Remind Him of that other box of nard
I brought Him once before, anointing Him
In wild sweet gratitude. . . . And so I fetched
All my bright store of gold, and bought a pound
Of rarer nard than yon, pent in a flask
More rich and rare than Herod's courtier gave

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

His light-o'-love. But the faces in that room
Plucked all the courage from me, and I fluttered
Against those icy gazes like a swallow
Caught in a snowstorm, till I saw Jesus smiling.
Then, in a maze, I stooped, and broke the flask,
And poured the nard on His thin dusty feet,
And mingled with the nard my hoarded tears,
And—since these shamed me with their bitterness—
Wiped them away with this long hair of mine
Where still the rich scent lingers.

Lazarus says

Judas was angry, but I heard him not,
For Jesus laid His hand upon my head,
And said, *Thank you, dear Mary.* Then I rose
And came away. And now He is crucified,
And now He is crucified!

She moved away

While I stupid with grief, crept to and fro
About the garden. There, his head bent low
Upon his knees, someone sat motionless.
Surely I knew that hand, that amber dress,
That black and amber turban; yes, indeed
Matthew it was; and in his hand a reed,
And on his knee a scroll whereon there fell
Not words, but only tears. "Ah Matthew, tell,
I do implore you, tell me more," I sighed,
"I know just this: Jesus is crucified!"

MATTHEW'S SECOND NARRATIVE

"Leave me alone! O world of fools! O Thou
More fool than all to write upon Thy brow
The very name of God and then allow
Those insects to destroy Thee. What's the good

THE PASSION

Of virtue or of hope? Two bits of wood
Put crosswise, end the best: of course we should
Have seen it coming; for He warned us well;
Those last weeks scarcely any sentence fell
From His set lips but was designed to tell
This tragic end. Nay, brother, move away
From that gray stone; the day ere yesterday
Living, He kneeled there (while we slept) to pray.
We slept! We slept! 'Could ye not watch one hour
With Me?' He said. Irrevocable hour,
Still canst thou hold regrets, but deeds no more.
O God, we failed Him, and now He is dead;
On yonder gibbet goutts of blood hang red;
They should have spouted from my side instead."

"Nay, Matthew," I implored, "move your sad mind—
Lest it unhinge—into a quieter place.
Here in Gethsemane, of your sweet grace,
Rest now with me: tell of your pilgrimage
From Pella." So I talked, and strove to assuage
His raging grief, and when he was calm he said:

We tramped the Ghôr from Pella, and so came
To Jericho: there running, like a flame
Of fire, a youth of most exclusive name
Fell down at Jesus' feet, an eager spirit:
"Good Master, what shall I do to inherit
The eternal life I long have sought to merit?"

"Call none good," He said, "but One.

'God is good, and God alone.

You know the commandments well;

Do not kill, and do not steal,

Do not commit adultery,

Nor bear false witness, nor delay

To pay the debts you owe, and ever

Honor your father and your mother."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Like a keen hound that sniffs and turns away
From some false trail, I heard Him sharply say,
"All these I kept since mine initial day."

He was an elflike thing, composed awry,
Not such as this world's pelf could satisfy,
But seeking those things gold can never buy.
He had not found them; so his wasted fist
Grasped still his yellow gold; and thro' a mist
Of pitying tears our Master said, "I wist,
I wist it well, O friend, but come
Make our homeless ways your home;
Still toward those fragile goods you lust,
Though soon they fade and fall to dust,
Bankrupt in men's hearts where you should
Have stored a heaven of gratitude.
You kept the Law, but not it all,
Many dead of hunger fall
By your door, too foul to touch;
Sons of Abram, and as such
Your own brothers; what arrears
You must pay for all those tears
You dried not, for all the dead
You once left uncomforted.
You kept laws whereof we spoke,
Well you kept them, but you broke
Greater laws which bid you hold
Neighbors dearer still than gold.
Rather earth than heaven hollow,
Sell and give, and come and follow."

He shuffled, rubbed his chin, and turned away
With face downcast, but I await the day
Of his return, for did not Jesus say:
"Seldom has a rich man trod

THE PASSION

Lightly toward the Kingdom of God.
Easier for you to try
To thread a camel through the eye
Of yonder needle, than essay
To climb the steep and narrow way
Toward Heaven with a sack
Of worldly riches on your back."

Here Peter cried out, "Who then can be saved?"
And Jesus, making answer said,
"Impossible with men indeed,
Not impossible with God."

"We twelve," said Peter, "left our all and came
Whither you led."

"Whither you led we came,"
Dark Judas echoed, "as moths into a flame."

"Yea, those things you sacrifice,"
Said Jesus, "everything that lies
Nearest you, dear friends, old home,
Kith and kin, when forth you roam
For My sake, will give you more
And richer content than before;
Even the sword that persecutes
Will stablish fast their sacred roots,
Till at last your souls will find
Nothing real left behind.
Only apparent great, grown small,
Apparent little, all in all."

Then came the encounter with another man
Of wealth, but this time of the hated clan
To which I once belonged, a publican.
So small this fellow was, he could not see,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

But some wild impulse drowned his dignity
And sent him climbing up a sycamore tree.

There Jesus saw him, and that instant read
The open missal of his face, which said:
"Thou art a prophet, raise me from the dead."
Courageous pity surged across that crowd
Of scowling boycotters, and bright and loud
The voice of Jesus rang (He is not proud
Except of Love's good name); we heard Him say,
"Haste, Zacchæus, down this way;
I must dine with you to-day."

With that brief sentence Jesus slipped behind
All the defenses of Zacchæus' mind;
Down from the tree he leapt; the Master twined
His arm round the excise-man's. Jericho
Gaped speechless, as she saw that strange pair go
Down the long street, so intimate and slow.
The little man broken with grief, and yet
Budding with joy, seemed almost to forget
The old reserve his shameful life had set
Between him and his townsmen; just without
His gaudy entrance door he turned about,
Speaking at once to Jesus and the rout:
"My life has been a blunder, but behold
All I have wronged will be repaid fourfold.
And needy neighbors will have half my gold."
Said Jesus, "Lo, salvation falls
Now on those long-cursèd walls;
Now Zacchæus doth proclaim
Himself a son of Abraham.
And I to-day rejoice, who come
To bring My absent brother home."

THE PASSION

That strange event was the inaugural hour
Of a great mission. Urgent more and more
His message grew; souls burst forth into flower
In every street; and when He made to go,
His converts pressed on Him: "What shall we do,
Thou gone? And comes Thy Kingdom quick or slow?"

"Here's a strange story," answered Jesus then,

"Of the tarrying time in the hands of men:

I will give you the tale as I had it straight

From one of the servants himself of late:

'Master was going abroad, and sent

For us three slaves before he went,

Gave his money to us on loan

For trading with when he was gone.

Twelve hundred pounds the cleverest got,

Five hundred was the next man's lot;

And half of that he gave to me,

Two hundred and fifty, and off went he.

Dan the clever one went out straight

Traded early and traded late;

Shadrach, taking Dan's advice,

Bought wholesale and retailed rice,

And I was always going to try

Something with mine, but the time slipped by.

It was long enough till Master came,

And I thought it would all be just the same

As it used to be before he went,

Till suddenly we heard that he meant

Promotion for all his slaves, at the end

Of probation time, to the rank of friend.

Well, he sent for the three of us soon.

Dan goes cheerfully singing a tune;

Four and twenty hundred pounds

Chink in his wallet, as lightly he bounds

Into his master's room. Very grand

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Out he comes with a seal in his hand,
Keys at his girdle, and 'Call me at eight:
The feast is at nine, and I must not be late.'
Shadrach is praised and promoted like Dan;
Then comes my turn, miserable man!
I say, I had hid it in case it got lost,
And I give it him back, but I learn to my cost,
When Shadrach and Dan have left me alone
Outside the big gates with a crust and a bone,
That those that have plenty always get fat
And the poor folk with nothing lose even that.'

And life," Jesus said, "is probation for you,
And death is the date of taking your due;
All the gold of earth is given
Just to teach the way to heaven."

As we passed through the gates we heard loud cries:
"Jesus, thou son of David." Lo! with eyes
Rolling and sightless, clad in beggar's guise
Grovels a man. "Have mercy, Lord, on me,"
He cries, and while the people chide him, he
Cries all the louder and more pitifully.
Now Jesus tarries and says "Call him here,"
And we approach: "He calleth thee; good cheer!"
Casting his cloak away in joy and fear
He stumbles forward:

"Can I do
Something," Jesus says, "for you?"
"Ah, Rabboni, give to me
By Your pity, power to see."
Jesus answers: "Go your way,
Your faith makes you well to-day."

While we climbed slowly up the steep highway
Leading to Sion, at the close of day,
I walked with Jesus. O, His face was fey.

THE PASSION

Soon He strode on alone; the misty air
Mounted between us till we all did stare
At what could scarce be He; or if it were
Then He was changed. Amazed we stumbled on
With chattering teeth. Madmen, we should have known,
We should have known! An hour, two hours were
gone,

Still on we stumbled, gazing each on each,
And each on Him. 'Ware of our stricken speech,
At last He turned, tarried till we should reach
His side; then thrust us toward a grove of oak,
And when we all were gathered round, He spoke
In calm and mighty accents:

"Lo!

Toward Jerusalem we go;
There the Son of man will be
Handed over secretly,
Sentenced by the priests and scribes,
Doomed, disowned; then Roman gibes,
Mocking, scourging, spitting, death,
Nay, but not for long," He saith.

And there we stood and stared and scraped the ground,
And not one word of hope or comfort found
Its single way to Him. The only sound
He heard, when He had ceased, the dying bleat
Of a young lamb, the scud of wolfish feet,
Then the thin whisper of the falling sleet.
We should have known! Blind fools, we should have
known!

Instead we dreamed still of an earthly throne,
And Jesus there, and all the emperors gone.
Our anger too with James and John caught flame
From blazing envy, when Salome came
To beg chief places near His throne for them.
So far our spirits were removed from His,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Who turned and smiled and courteously did kiss
His foolish aunt, while He made answer this:

“You know not what you ask, I think;

Can you drink this cup I drink?

Can you now descend with Me

Into this dark portentous sea?

‘Yes,’ you say. Ah, then together

We shall face the bitter weather.

You shall drink the cup I drink,

Down those billows you shall sink.

I may let you share My sorrow

Now, but on the unknown morrow

I cannot tell what souls may light

Upon My left or on My right.”

He saw our rage, and like a shepherd drew

Us close together, and half-smiling thro’

The gloom He spoke:

“Very Noble is a name

Any Gentile king may claim,

If he but find a golden crown

And take his seat upon a throne;

But in our Kingdom, if you will

Find a title, you must kneel,

Serve your brothers. He deserves

Highest place who lowliest serves.

Came the Son of man to give,

Came to serve, not to receive,

Came with His own life to buy

Ransom for prisoners doomed to die.”

Ah, yes, I was a prisoner doomed to death.

Now worms are in His bones, and I draw breath

In the bright day: “I came to die,” He saith.

THE PASSION

With spirits numbed and limbs that seemed as lead
We left the garden. "Matthew, who goes there?"
I cried, and he: "There goes a broken heart,
If ever heart did break. To ease his smart
I think His angel may have chosen you:
That once was Peter." Lifting then his scroll
Pale Matthew slowly vanished down the road,
While Peter, like a ghost, before me stood,
And fixed on me his hollowed, blazing eyes.

PETER'S SECOND NARRATIVE

Ever through my unconfessing spirit
Roam those sins, till all my bones wax weary
As with aching age: I am in torment;
Hearken, I must speak; I am in torment,
Torment, for I need my Lord's forgiveness.
More than this vile flesh craves air to breathe in,
Craves my soul my only Lord's forgiveness.
Well, He's gone—dead!—passed from earth to Sheol,
Gone beyond my reach; it is a lifetime
Since I saw Him die, and yet the starlight
Came but once since then. I saw Him hanging
Helpless on His cross; I saw the trial;
Standing in the courthouse, heard the verdict;
Said it was the voice of God; in God's name
I denied the Master; on Golgotha
Stood amazed, and all my mind and spirit
Flamed into one thought: The Man that hangs there,
Sole of all I knew, was pure and holy.
Then in *His* name I denied Jehovah.
Hark you still; the dome of my remembrance
Reels with wheeling fantasies, like vultures

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Preying on my peace. First I remember
Always, always Jesus' Heavenly Father—
Caring, loving—was His Father sleeping
When they drove the nails in, thrust the gibbet
Thud into its socket? What's the meaning,
What's the meaning, I say, of this nightmare?"

I tried to soothe him: lately I had turned
Matthew's wild musings with my questioning
Anent their journey: once more I must fling
My questions out. "Now, Peter, tell me, pray,
How fared you on the evening of the day
You reached Jerusalem, and what happened there?
Did you find lodging? Must you stand and stare?"

If I stare it is because I see It
Ever there before me. Jasper, Jasper,
Go and leave me. What's the use of talking?
Glut your ignorant eyeballs on the beauty
Once I found in Sion. The world's a shambles
Now, for me . . . O, I am weary, weary. . . .

Yet I thirst to tell you more: we did not
Enter Sion that first night, but tarried
Out in Bethany; and on the morrow
John and I were sent to a certain village.
Someone there expected us that morning.

"Go your way," Jesus had said,
"To yonder village. Ere you tread
A dozen paces up the street
You will find with tethered feet
A colt whereon man never sat:
Loose him for me; if at that
Someone comes and cries, 'What, ho?'
Say, the Master needs him. Lo!
He will straightway let him go."

THE PASSION

So it happened, a most strange adventure!
All of it is written in the prophets;
Jesus knew that, and some whim, ironic,
Innocent, and sad, had made Him do it.
Gentle smile of pity and of humor,
Godlike gift, only far-sighted spirits,
Irony, possess thee, reconciler
Thou, of man and destiny; and Jesus
Did possess thee, He did drink thy comfort
Often, these last days. He knew the pilgrims
Out from Galilee were fain to hail Him
King, and Savior from the yoke of Cæsar.
He would prove to them how far the prophet
Soared in thought above those petty projects.
Ah, and when the shouts of acclamation
Sounded all along the highway, we too,
His disciples, soon forgot the sadness
Shadowing earlier words, we were swept onward.
With the lyric crowd, poor fools and dullards!
Might we not have known? The city people,
Priests, and Pharisees, looked on like statues
Only more disdainful; some pale Levites
Cried on Him to stay their silly shouting.
Chivalrous as ever, He made answer:
 "If they cease to praise their King
 Even stones would shout and sing."

See He onward goes, how meek and lowly,
Riding on is milk-white ass: "Hosannah!
Hail, Thou son of David, blessed, blessed!"
Still He smiles. I think perhaps a monarch
Playing in a palace with his children,
When he sees them strut on hobbyhorses,
Wearing tinfoil crowns in solemn ardor,
So might smile; he knows their kingdom cometh

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

When his brows are cold, he knows that kingdom
Other than their childish phantasy framed it.
So the Master only smiled, I fancy
Since He saw His Kingdom in the distance
Waiting for us, after endless folly.
Little wonder, all the same, that wise men,
Scribes and Pharisees and city merchants
Thought Him mad. They thought this petty prophet,
Weaponless, with unarmed peasant followers,
Meant to drive the eagle out of Sion.
Lo, He gently stays His ass, and turning
Toward Jerusalem, He sits and gazes
Out across the valley, till His strange smile
Withers into tears; the ecstatic voices
Round about Him falter and are silent,
While He, so long silent, now is speaking.
John and Andrew hear Him, and I hear Him,
No one else, for our dear Lord is sobbing
As He speaks, and all His face is buried
In the ass's mane, to hide His anguish:

“O, if thou hadst known . . . thou thou,
The meaning of thy name, even now
Those sealing eyes, sealèd in thy sin,
Had almost let the truth shine in.
O fruitless tree, Jerusalem,
How often hoping still, I came
Seeking figs beneath thy bough,
But ever sought in vain! And now
The Gardener hath set His spade
At thy roots, for thou art dead!”

So across the sunlight and the singing
Swept an icy wind, and when we straggled
Through the city gates, our feeble shouting

THE PASSION

Wilted in the blaze of empty cursing,
Hissed from Sion's riffraff. "Who's this fellow?"
Shrieked some Temple sycophants. His followers
Cried no more, "It is the son of David,"
Murmured only, "Jesus out of Nazaret,
Down in Galilee, Jesus the prophet."
Ah, those tears of His had quenched forever
All the foolish hopes that dreamed to see Him
Crowned on David's throne. We reached the Temple
Just at sunset; never scene so dismal!
Half dismantled booths, and nameless litter
Stained the courts; the pariah dogs were nosing
Through the offal. Only like sad angels
Flocks of pitying snowflakes spread their damask
Softly round each sacrilege, and softly
Laid a carpet on the filthy flagstones
For the Master's feet. He hardly tarried
Nor did speak one word. Like a sleepwalker
Forth He went, and we all followed after,
Out to Bethany, but what there happened
Other lips than mine have told.

"Yea, Peter,"

Said I, "Mary Magdalen to-day
Told me of that last night in Bethany."

Well, next morning

Back we came. The Temple courts were crowded,
Reeking with the stench of countless cattle;
Sheep were bleating, doves moaned in their cages,
Coins were jingling: pilgrims' plaintive voices
Dared just one more protest, that their offerings,
Good and fat, should be condemned of minions
Kept by priests, so *their* goods must be purchased.
Up and down the Master paced, and swiftly

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Stooped and gathered some green willow withies,
Knotted them together. Then I saw Him
Like a Stranger standing there before me;
So much changed He was, His cheeks pale olive
Flamed like burning coal. And anger darted
Terror-striking, from His eyes. He lifted
Both His arms and swept upon the merchants
Fiercely, and before His wrath they huddled
Pell-mell through the gates. "Take hence those
creatures,"

Cried He, pointing to the doves; "the Scriptures
Say My House shall be a House of prayer,
Not a den of thieves!" Muttered one priest then:
"Certainly You are without Your province!"

"An you will," He answered, "lo!
I will build or ere you know
A house whose insubstantial gates
No money-changer desecrates.
What the cost? All that is born
Springs from death. Except a corn
Fall into the earth and die,
Barren it must, and lonely lie;
If it die and fall to earth,
Richer harvests come to birth."

That same day there came a deputation
Most official: "Give us your credentials,"
They demanded, "for this strange behavior."
Jesus met them with the counter-question:

"I will ask one question too;
Answer Me, I answer you:
Was John's mission planned by men
Or by heaven, tell Me plain. . . .
You are silent; I then too
Must refuse to answer you."

THE PASSION

Ah, my friend, it was a simple story
Jesus told them then, but laid within it
Almost casually, like a pearl
Strung by little hands among her corals,
Shone one word that stunned me as it stunned me
Once before upon the Mount of Hermon:
My beloved Son, He dared to echo—
Nay, not dared but, innocently listening,
Innocently used the very language
Whispered by the Father's voice within Him,
My beloved Son. I and My Father
Both are one. That was the air He breathed in,
Far from ours, although His hands were horny
Toiling as we toiled, His feet were footsore
Just as soon as ours. Here is the story:
First He quotes, you notice, from Esaias:

“Once there was a man who made
A vineyard, fenced it round, and laid
Wine-vat, built a tower, and then
Let it out to husbandmen.
Off to foreign lands he went,
Whence, at vintage time, he sent
A servant to receive his due.
Him they caught and beat and threw
Forth with nothing. Sent he then
Another of his serving men;
Torn he returned, with battered head.
A third returned not, being dead.
Many others sent he; some
Came home shamed, some came not home.
Therefore having left yet one
Well-beloved only son
Him he also sent at last,
Saying, None dare him outcast.
'Lo, the heir,' whispered then

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Seeing him, these husbandmen;
'Come and kill him.' With a shout
They took him, killed him, cast him out,
'Now,' they chatter, 'this being dead,
We shall be the heirs instead.'

What then will the owner do
To those husbandmen, think you?
They shall die, and in their place
The Lord will put a better race."

"God forbid!" cried out one eager listener,
"God forbid our race should ever perish."
Each stared at the other: Israel's gallant
Cried, "She shall not die;" but Israel's Savior
(Once at least, I dreamed Him Israel's Savior)
Saw her body's doom; He saw her stumble
On the very stone of her salvation:
So the Master cried aloud in anguish:

"What then does the Scripture mean? . . .
The marble, human hands had thrown
Aside in haste, at last has been
Made into the corner stone.
The Lord hath done this thing, and we
Marvel before the mystery.
Woe to him who judges now
The writing upon Israel's brow!
Woe to her whose brows are bitten
With the judgments God hath written."

Eager hands twitched to arrest the Master,
Yet lacked courage, for the people liked Him—
Liked, loved, worshiped, but they could not save
Him.

THE PASSION

Wednesday was one long plot to trap Him.
Words may turn to parricides, if hatred
Tar them with an accent, an omission.
So these hypocrites fawned on each sentence.
Pharisees joined forces with Herodians.
This, for instance, "Rabbi, you are fearless;
Court no human favor; we have seen you
Honest always, sincere, very truthful
While you teach the way of God. Now tell us,
Is it right to pay poll tax to Cæsar?
Shall we pay, or shall we not pay, Rabbi?"
"Why do you tempt Me? Bring Me now
A shilling piece. Whose is that brow?
Whose that inscription?" "That," said they,
Is Cæsar's." Cold He turned away:
"Render Cæsar Cæsar's due,
Render God His tribute too."

Dumb they gazed upon the bright denarius;
Blushed a little; with embarrassed laughter,
Stuck it in its wallet, and departed.

Soon the next assault was joined; but this time
Sadducees attacked; these old-established
Guardians of our ritual; what's our ritual
Worth to us or them, if, as they hold it,
There is no hereafter? Nothing, I say.
Natheless they essayed to make His teaching
Seem ridiculous before the people:
"Master, you must know the Law Levirate;
Well, then, take the case of seven brothers
Dying all in turn and with no offspring.
Lastly she who wived them all dies also;
Whose wife will she be in the hereafter?"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Holy indignation thrilled and thundered
Through His answer, while He towered above them:
"Whence does your mistake arise?
In your ignorance it lies.
Doubly ignorant you are
Of His word and of His power.

And had you searched the Scriptures, then
You would have known we rise again.
Have you not read in Moses' book
How from the burning bush One spoke
Loud and clear, *The God I am*
Of Isaac and of Abraham,
The God of Jacob; you had said
These patriarchs are long since dead;
'*I am* their God,' that Voice proclaimed:
Not dust but living souls He named,
And called them children; ye therefore
Do surely very greatly err."

Nothing in His words as I can tell them—
More He said too, but I have forgotten—
Can reveal to you the holy frenzy
Held restrained within them, as He stood there
Gazing out across the untrodden marches,
Pioneer of life, authentic guardian
Of the sweetest hope we mortals cherish. . . .
Hope? Poor madman that I am! He's murdered,
Cold, and buried; would but God me whisper
By some bush, "*I am* the God of Jesus!"
Ah, that burning bush; I doubt if ever
Moses stood there in his waking senses
Full in the sunlight. Say that he was dreaming
Underneath the stars beside his sheepcotes,
Who would pay one mite for all his visions?
Nay, I leave that now, and tell my story. . . .

THE PASSION

Through the crowd there came a gentle scholar,
Asked of Him a question, "Which, I pray you,
Tell me, do you count the first commandment?"
"This," said Jesus, "is the first and greatest:

'Hear, O Israel, the Lord
Our God is the one true Lord;
Thou shalt love Him with thy whole
Strength and mind, and heart and soul.'
And the next is, 'Thou shalt love
Thy neighbor as thyself.' Above
All the rest these stand."

"Yea, Rabbi,"

Said the scribe; "most rightly have you answered;
Our God stands alone: there is no other;
Him to love with all the understanding,
All the heart and all the strength, and further
No less than ourselves to love our neighbors
Is far better than our whole burnt-offerings."
Jesus, seeing he had answered wisely,
Laid His hand upon the young man's shoulder
Saying, "You are not far from the Kingdom."

Ah, but "neighbor"—will you tell us, Rabbi,
What that word means? And the Master answered:

"A certain man set out to go
From Sion down to Jericho,
Fell among thieves, who stripped him bare,
Wounded him, and left him there.
Came a priest, and passed him by,
Came a Levite, with a sigh,
Paused, and looked, and passed him by.

Then came a Samaritan
Riding down, and saw the man;
Went to him with oil and wine,
Bound his wounds in linen fine,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Set him on his gentle ass,
Led him slowly through the pass,
Brought him to an inn, and there
Tended him with anxious care
All night long, and gave next day
Money to the host to pay
Every need, said 'Treat him well;
When I come next you will tell
What I owe you more.' Now say,
Which of these who passed that way
Was neighbor to the man that fell
Among the thieves?"

O'er the courts there fell a curious silence
While our Master waited, half expecting
Further challenge from His foes. It came not;
Only muttered words, angry, yet baffled:
"This can surely never be Messiah,"
"He belongs not to the House of David,"
Fell upon our ears, as they departed.
Like a pointed spear the arm of Jesus
Leveled toward their backs, and all the people
Stood and waited for the word that followed:
"Why say those scribes, Christ shall be
Son of David? Did not he,
Taught by the Spirit, speak this word,
Sit Thou, the LORD said to my Lord,
On My right hand till I have made
Thy foes Thy footstool. Thus he said
Christ was his Lord: how then could He
Also be his son, tell Me?"

All the crowd was with Him now, and standing
There within the Temple courts a brief time
Like a prince within his father's palace,
Jesus spoke in fierce denunciation:

THE PASSION

"When the scribes and Pharisees
Point to Moses' laws, keep these;
But when they point to their own,
Turn away, and walk alone;
For they say, but do not act.
See their victim's shoulders packed
To breaking point, close by they stare,
Nor with one finger help to bear.
Every part of life they plan
Just to be admired by man:
Widen their phylacteries,
Flutter tassels in the breeze,
Love to be the guest of honor
At dinner, and the foremost donor
In the synagogue; their faces
Happy in the market-places
When the people bow and cry,
Humbly before them: 'Hail, Rabbi.'
But while they seem to dine on meat,
Widows' houses they do eat,
And while they pray before the crowd,
They weave their souls a ghastly shroud.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,
Hypocrites, because you please,
Being shut yourselves from heaven, to hold
Your brothers from those gates of gold.
Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,
Hypocrites, from beds of ease
You decorate the prophets' tombs,
And build the martyrs' marbled rooms.
'Had we lived with our fathers then,
We had not killed those holy men,'
You say: but yet you are the sons
Clearly, of those evil ones,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Since your hands will soon be red
With the blood your fathers shed.
Serpents, brood of vipers, how
Shall ye escape damnation now?"

While He spoke there waited at the crowd's edge
Some bewildered Pharisees, but slowly
Those mean forms withdrew, and left the people
Waiting on His words; yet He was silent.
Evening fell, and still the people tarried,
While, like carven stone, He sat before us.
"Master, speak," one standing near Him whispered
Just at dusk; and then He spoke:

"My children,

Yet a little while the light
Tarries with you, then comes night;
Even as you tramp by day,
Lest in the dark you miss the way,
Live by light, and you shall be
Children of light; believe in Me,
You shall be the children dear
Of Him who chose to send Me here.
Look on Me, and you shall trace
The kindness of your Father's face.
But if you say you have not heard
The Father's welcome in My word,
Still within your heart alway
The words I spoke to you will stay
And stare at you on Judgment Day."

THE WIDOW'S MITE

Home she goes to her fireless grate,
Rusty, and old and thin as can be,
But she sits and smiles at her meager plate:
"I feel as rich as a queen," quoth she,

THE PASSION

And who was He who so proudly sate
Over against the Treasury?

"O' nights," she whispered, "I mostly am sad
Thinking how once I went happy and free
In the days gone by, but to-night I am glad;
Why, I know not, unless it might be
That just for a moment—you think I am mad—
He lifted his eyes and looked on me."

Homeless He wanders on Olivet;
"What a gift God had to-night!" quoth He,
"Yon widow, who came ere the sun was set,
Cast her all in the Treasury.
It was only a farthing she gave Him, yet
None of the rest gave as much as she."

Passing through the Temple gates that evening,
Matthew said to Jesus, "How I marvel
Seeing all that strength and beauty builded
So together." "Ah, my friend," said Jesus,
"There it stands now, but I say
Of that vast pile you see to-day
There shall not be left alone
One solitary standing stone."

All that night we wandered in the starlight
Over Olivet. On sleeping Sion,
As upon a bride unwon, our gazes
Rested mournful; all the Bridegroom's wooing
Had been vain. He would return to-morrow.
Had it been to urge her to rebellion,
She might still have heard Him; but His message
Left her cold, and now within the hourglass
Lo! the sands of grace were running quickly.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Cold beneath a cypress in the garden
Called Gethsemane, we sat and waited,
Sleepless, till the silver trumpet sounded,
Chill and clear, at dawn, from Sion's watchtowers.
James and John with Andrew sat beside me;
"We must ask," I said, "what things the Master
Meant by those strange words anent the Temple."
Separate, beneath another cypress,
Jesus sat, and we four drew around Him,
While the primrose skies beyond Mount Scopus
Trembled into crimson. "Look," said Jesus,
Pressing back the heavy cypress branches.
Carved upon the tree trunk was one letter,
Jesus touched it: "When I was a stripling
I carved that upon a Paschal evening
Two and twenty years ago, and slept here
All the night. . . ."

Long time then we stood silent;
Black against the pulsing sky the Temple
Reared her perfect towers: at last I whispered,
Pointing over Kidron to Mount Sion,
"Tell us when shall these things be You spoke of;
What shall be the sign of Your returning?"
Well, He spoke; He told us in such fashion,
In such language, with an air so ghostly,
I for one grew dizzy as I listened,
Faint, and very cold, though warm the sunbeams
Smote us from the East; as though He *were* dead
Jesus spoke; His far-off voice came floating
Strangely, from a world not ours, yet ever,
Like a poet lost amid his fancies,
Suddenly recalled, He condescended
Just a moment to a lesser language
Fitter for such infant souls as ours were.

THE PASSION

Think! He was about to die and knew it;
Petty folk like us have 'wildered visions
By that river's brink, and wild surmisings;
Some have seen a waiting face in Sheol,
Some on darkening deathbeds heard a whisper,
As from lips long cold. But His vast spirit
Rang from roof to vault with all the discords
Echoing down that week of direst pity
Earth or heaven had ever known or dreamed of.
Surely through the universe of Being
Every angel wept and every demon
Laughed his grisly laugh, only we humans
Gaped and chattered as though nothing happened:
"When shall these things be?" I said to Jesus.

Gazing on the little J that dented
That old cypress tree, His eyes grew distant,
Seemed to gaze into a mighty mirror,
Seemed to see two visions therein woven
Subtly; the uprising of two kingdoms,
Heaven and hell, while time and space went smoking
Upward into nothingness, and Sheol
Merged into the pinnacles of Sion.
Desolation smote the holy places;
Fair Jerusalem a heap of ruins,
Jesus riding on the clouds of heaven,
Riding toward Him mighty hosts of evil,
Charioteering Antichrist whose beauty
Lured the very elect into ruin.
Down the ages battle ever hotter
Waxing, evil ever grown more evil,
Good more good; He saw the holy Kingdom
Close at hand; He saw its eager pressing
Hard against the doors of men and women,
Waiting till they shook with fear and terror,

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

So to enter. He saw a day of Judgment,
Doom and horror, saw the hurtling fire clouds
Burst and fade away, and lo! His Kingdom
Lies at peace; Jerusalem the Golden
Gleaming on its breast, and all those Kingdoms
This world vaunted, spun to wisps of vapor,
Vanishing above the city towers. . . .

Such, I gathered from His dreamy phrases,
Was the vision *He* saw; now the others
Gathered round us and He turned toward them.
"Peter," said He, "peers into the future,
Asks Me of it; much I cannot tell you.

When shall these things be, none know,
Angels in heaven nor men below,
Even the Son is unaware,
Only the Father shall declare.
But this I say, Take heed, take heed,
Many will rise up in My stead
Saying they are Christ. Beware,
You will not find Jesus there,
Nor will you find Me hid within
The judges of the Sanhedrin.
Let them do their worst, and know
I with you, not against you, go.
Nor will you find Me set upon
A throne when thither you are gone
To stand before a king, declaring
Whose the banner you are bearing;
Nay, I shall be within your heart,
Your defense shall be my part.
And when they say, Lo, here! and lo,
There is Christ! You then will know
He Whom you serve is not to see,
But hides in men's hearts secretly."

THE PASSION

Down the slopes of Olivet we wended;
By a budding fig tree Jesus tarried:
"Learn a parable," said He,
From this softly budding tree.
By the leaf buds bursting here
Summer we know is coming near;
So the bud of fiery pain
Breaks into the heavenly Reign.
Take heed, take heed, again I say,
Always watch and always pray.
Is it late or is it soon
The Master comes, by night or noon,
No one knows, take heed therefore,
With ordered task and open door,
Ready for His coming, wait,
Who returneth soon or late."

O to linger now as then we lingered
With Him in those dewy olive gardens,
While we broke our fast almost forgetting
All that waited over Kidron's waters.
Far too soon we filed across the valley,
Climbed up to the Temple courts: how chilling
Blew the wind that day, but not so chilling
That snow-laden wind as the cold glances
All around us; through a maze of hatred
Jesus walked; but still the common people
Crowded round Him, so He stayed and taught them.

While He sat there teaching as a Rabbi
For the last time, came a queer procession
Up the courtyard, five men and one woman;
Cold and angry she, but they elated:
Sensual mouths that aped an air of virtue

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Chid her while they brought her to our Master.
What was she to them but bait to trap Him,
Cage Him in some verbal indiscretion,
Hand Him on to Caiaphas to-morrow?

"Rabbi," said they, "we have caught this woman
In adultery; now Moses bade us
Stone such persons, tell us what do you say?"
Hot with shame the Master stooped in silence,
Traced some aimless letters on the pavement;
Shamed He was for her sake, but still deeper
Must have been His shame for that cold malice,
Malice that could dare accuse the woman,
So it might destroy the Man: their coarse minds
Failed to plumb His holy suffering silence,
Asked Him yet again, "Say shall we stone her?"
Then He raised His shadowed head
One burning moment, while He said:
"Him who hath no sin to own
Among you five cast the first stone."

.

Tell Me, silent paving stone,
Are all her accusers gone?
One by one they steal away
As souls might steal from judgment day.
Only she remains: "Tell Me,
Woman, where thine accusers be?"
"None of them condemned me." . . . "Nor
Do I condemn. Go, sin no more."

Shivering she withdrew, just once uplifting
Tearful eyes upon Him. Nay, still downcast
Sat He there, shamefast with all the burden
Their dark sin and hers had cast upon Him.

THE PASSION

O how foolishly her gauds and jewels
Tinkled through the hush of His atoning!
O how tawdry shined her skin-deep beauty
There beside the beauty of His sorrow!

That was Thursday morning; well, soon after
Jesus left us. "Little ones," He whispered,
Like a mother whispering to her children,
"Just a little while I needs must leave you:
I am going to prepare you places,
I will come again and take you with Me;
Once more then we all shall sit together."
So He left us guessing at His secret.
None guessed then, but now we know He hasted
Up the western hill, through a walled garden,
Knocked at John Mark's father's door and entered;
Found the good-man, begged of him a favor,
That one night to lend our Lord his guest room
Newly built upon his garden terrace,
So we all might keep the feast together.

With His own hands Jesus spread the carpet,
Laid the mat of skins upon the table,
Covered it with linen, ranged the couches,
Washed the coriander and the lettuce,
Horehound, thistles, endive: Himself kneaded
Nuts and figs and dates and bitter almonds,
Cinnamon and vinegar and lemons,
Till the *Kharosel* lay on the table
Hard and comely, shaped as once our fathers
Shaped in bitter bonds the clay of Egypt.
John Mark brought unleavened bread, and vessels
Filled with red wine, then a spilling handful
Brought of ripe seeds, threw them through the chamber,
Smiling, so he loved the rite, and sought out

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Every leavened grain from every corner;
Then with lanterns all marched round the chamber,
While the good-man spoke the words of cleansing.
Forth next to the garden, there to kindle
Fire to consume the unlawful leaven.
Toward evening He returned and hailed us;
So a little while among the olives
Sate we all in quietude till Jesus
Called Jochanan and me, Simon, near Him:
"Go, ye twain, and stand and wait
Yonder by the Essene Gate,
Till there climb up from the hollow
One who carries water; follow
Into the house where he shall go.
Say then to the good-man, Lo,
The Rabbi saith, "Where is My room
Whither I to-night may come
With My twelve disciples, there
Eat the feast I did prepare?
He will show you then a room
All prepared, but ere we come
Roast the lamb, and bake the bread,
And light the lanterns overhead."

Thus it all was done, and soon they followed.
By the gate we met them just at sunset,
Lingered on the terrace, gazing eastward
Over Olivet, and toward the palm tree
Guarding Lazarus' doorway, but the wind blew
Coldly through the oleander bushes,
Scattered great white petals of magnolia
Round our feet, and pear and apple blossom.
So we entered in; the silver lanterns
Dimly glowed within the darkening chamber,
All lay sweet and still and richly ordered;

THE PASSION

Gay almost were we, our fears seemed foolish
There at that bright Paschal meal beside Him.

Even Jesus smiled at first: "Lo, Peter,"
Said He, "since this upper room resembled
So much your old chamber in Capernaum
Where we spent such happy hours, I chose it
For to-night." "O nay, my Lord," I murmured,
"This is richer far than your old chamber."
"Ah, but we are richer too," He answered.
"Yea," said I, "by all we lived together,
Lived and loved and worked for. . . ." "And in heaven,"
Jesus answered, "all these things are treasured,
Waiting us again." Meanwhile the good-man
Took the agate cup, and left the chamber,
Filled it from the wine-vats of Engedi,
Set it on the table, and the Master
Blessed the bread and wine, gave John the goblet
First, not me, nor James: I lost my temper.
James did too. Our feet were still unwashed;
None had thought it was his turn to do it.
Softly then, while we three were complaining,
Jesus rose and took a towel and basin,
Poured the water in, and first to Judas
Came, and washed his feet, and dried and kissed them;
So to all in turn He came and likewise
Did to each. "Nay, Lord, you shall not touch me;
Leave my feet alone," I cried; but Jesus:
"To-night you know not what I do,
But hereafter you will know."

"Nay, Lord," still I cried, "you shall not wash them;
Never shall you wash my feet." But Jesus:
"Nay, I wash them for a sign,
Are ye not washed, ye are not Mine."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Then I knelt before Him, all my pride gone.
"Master, wash my hands and my head also."

"It is meet

Only now to wash your feet.
Thus I serve you, that you may
Serve, when I am gone away,
Greatest must be like youngest then,
Chief ones turn to serving men.
The least distinguished must be host,
The chiefest stoop to serve the most;
And I will come and be your Guest,
In robes of humblest servant dressed,
For each of you has been My friend
In those hard days that now make end;•
And each of you will be My guest
In the Kingdom of the blest."

Silent sat we then till Jesus signaled
Matthew, and he asked the ritual questions:
Wherefore eat unleavened bread, and wherefore
Bitter herbs to-night and a lamb roasted.
Wherefore gather round one board together?
All stood up; the Holy Word was chanted,
John Mark served the roasted lamb; the good-man
Poured forth wine, and Jesus, smiling, spoke then:

"Even as I stole away
From you a little while to-day,
So I might Myself prepare
Our last feast together here,
Now once more I must depart,
Let not sorrow fill your heart;
I shall not be long away
From you; was I long to-day?
I go just to deck the room
For you again, and then I come,

THE PASSION

And take you each once more to be
Happy again at home with Me."

Then we sang the Paschal Psalms, but Jesus
Could not sing. "What ails Thee, Lord? What ails
Thee?"

Cried we, for we marked the beads of anguish
Stud His brow; a while He sat in silence,
Seeking words, yet hating still to find them:

"Verily . . . I say . . . I say

One sits here who shall betray

Me to-night . . . to-night, and he . . .

Suppeth in this room with Me. . . ."

Followed on those words a sickening silence:

Would He name the name too vile for naming?

Nay, this was a bad dream or a madness

Fall'n on me, or me, or me. We spoke then

As men speak in dreams: "Is it I, Master?"

"Is it I?" each wailed; and none He answered

Till we all had spoken saving Judas.

Judas' lips moved. No sound came. We all stared

Horror-struck upon him; "Is it I, Lord?"

Last of all he asked, but ere he asked it

We had guessed. Yet in that very moment

Jesus handed him the bread of friendship

Out of His own dish: *Lad, by this token*

See I love you still, the gesture told him;

But aloud He said: "Go, get it over!"

Slinking like a chid hound Judas left us . . .

"Dastard!" did I say? O foul, foul conscience,

Stuck within my breast, that drags my own self

Down to the same mire, and fits the same word

Stark across my brows—nay, stand and hearken;

Surely it might ease my mind to tell you!

THE PASSION

John will tell you many words of comfort
Spoken by the Master at the table,
Tell of that mysterious second supper
After Judas left—the new Passover.
You must ask him later, for my treason
Blots the half out. Here is how it happened:
We had left the festal upper chamber,
Toward Gethsemane we wended slowly
Underneath the dazzling stars of Nisan,
Till beside the garden gate He tarried,
Plucking at the latch, and looking toward us:
“Soon not one of you, but all
Shall have strayed beyond My call,
Like those sheep of whom it was written:
They scatter when the shepherd is smitten;
Yet you leave Me not alone,
My Father bides when you are gone.”

“All may fall or scatter,” I protested,
“Saving me, for I will never leave Thee!”

“Simon, Simon, toward God’s throne
Satan I see, as earlier, gone,
And naming My disciples ask
To be assigned the Tempter’s task;
But there too My prayers be,
That thy faith may not fail thee;
So when thou hast turned again
Strengthen such as do remain.”

“Whither do You go?” I cried. He answered—
What He meant I know not—In the new life
After He should rise, His sheep no longer
(Us, He meant) should go astray, but turning
Home again to Galilee, and preaching

THE PASSION

As He preached, should ever see Him leading
Somehow with the mind's eye, yet more real
Even than of yore, our souls' true shepherd,
We His little flock still by the lakeside.
Ah, that will not happen now! I failed Him:
"All may turn against You," I repeated,
"Yet not I forever." But He answered:
"Peter, ere the cock shall crow
You will deny you even know
Who I am."

"O never, never, never,"
I protested, who that night denied Him.
First in yon dread garden of His anguish
This mean clod fell fast asleep while Jesus
Wrestled on the brink of death. He waked me:
"Simon, are you sleeping? Say
Could you not watch one hour to-day?
Watch and pray, for trials steal
Nigh you now, and though you feel
Strong in spirit, what avail
Is that, with flesh so faint and frail?"

THE SHADOW OF DEATH

O shepherd lad of Bethlehem,
What could you know of death?
How calmly sang you of it,
And with how sure a faith!

Amazed, I tread the Valley,
And shiver while the shade
With fearful, measured footsteps
Creeps up this olive glade.

THE PASSION

Are there sweet scents in Heaven
From dew-enameled flowers?
And hath God set His starlight
Above those City Towers?

And there, when dawn is breaking,
Will one lark rise and sing?
Or shall I hear to-morrow
Her last bright caroling?

In Sepporis the shepherds
Are watching by their flocks,
El Melek's liquid music
Strays from her shining rocks.

The eve-jar on Lasharon
Sings from an almond tree,
While yon full moon climbs southward
From Gilead silently.

In Nazaret My Mother
Prepares to-morrow's bread,
Her hands are slow with sorrow,
Her face is pale with dread.

Shall I return from Sheol,
Or shall I ever see
That face, which made earth heaven,
Smile, as of yore, on Me?

Crashing twigs and flaring torches roused me
Full awake; a ring of bestial faces,
Flushed and soiled, closed round us. Quick the traitor
Kissed our Lord for sign. I drew my dagger,

THE PASSION

Wounded someone. Jesus moaned, and kneeling
Down beside him, tended him, and chid me:

"Peter, sheathe your sword, I say,
Who slays with sword the sword will slay:
Worthier weapons I must gain
To help me in this dire campaign,
Unseen legions soon will stand
And comfort Me on either hand."

Snap! my courage went; the rest were wavering
Saving John, but when I turned and bolted
Through the trees, all followed. Down by Kidron
John rejoined me, cried, "O, we must follow!"
So we reached the high priest's house as Jesus
Vanished through the gates. The porter knew John;
(Zebedee has long supplied the Temple
Weekly with great loads of fish); we entered.
Peering in my face a small maidservant
Said, "O, surely you too are a follower,
One of Jesus' followers." Ere I knew it,
"Let me pass," I snapped. "I do not know Him."
Did not know Him, brother—did not know Him?
Yes, I said that—said I did not know Him.
Just beyond the inner gate stood Jesus,
Bound and pale: the trial was in process.
Dazed and shivering, by the lighted brazier
Down I sat and hid my face from Jesus,
Sat and warmed my hands, and wept a little,
Thought of Galilee and the bright uplands
Where we walked with Him in other springtides,
Where we slept with Him among the white flowers,
White moths fluttering, distant white stars falling.
White the ashes now within the brazier,
All those sunny memories fading, fading,
Drifting down the winds. . . . The bright tribunal,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Where the high priest sat, loomed large and splendid;
That was real. There sat God's own servant;
God Himself sat there pronouncing judgment;
Was not that His very Finger writing
"Failure" over those three foolish years?

Worse is yet to come; another slave girl
Sauntering past me turned with taunting finger,
Pointed: "This man also was with Jesus."
Once again I said I did not know Him;
So they taunted me, and so I blustered
More and more, and cursed and swore till someone
Laughed, and said, "Like a trapped wolf he's howling."

Just then all the court rose, and the Prisoner
Turned and looked at me before He vanished
Down the gateway: so our friendship ended.
O, I will admit there was no anger
Burning in His eyes: His wounded spirit
Like a dying bird was still and piteous.
I had failed Him: far off, from some homestead
Out on Olivet, the cocks were crowing.
I remembered Jesus' word: "Ere cockcrow
You will thrice deny you ever knew Me;"
Bitterly I wept. Away out northward
Dawn was breaking over dear Bethsaida.
Once again, as in a flash of lightning,
Those three marvelous years rose up before me,
Nights of fellowship and days of service,
Deeds, words, silences, His hands, His features,
His blue robe, His voice, His way of speaking,
Like a king, yet simple, as with children;
All the joys and griefs we shared together,
There in that one last long look ingathered.
He deceived? Our Master an impostor?

THE PASSION

No, no, no, let all things else deceive me:
He was true. To think I had denied Him,
Jesus, very soul of Truth, O blind heart
Desperately wicked and deceitful!
Think, I, Peter, once was His disciple!

Long I lay, with dark remorse devouring
All my soul, then knew that I must see Him,
Fall before Him, beg for His forgiveness.
Cost me what it might; better to perish
So forgiven by Jesus, than to live on
Cast away. Across the courts I hastened;
What was that? Men shouting: *A good riddance!*
Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Running
Giddily I reached the dread procession.
Ah, but when I saw, I could not follow;
In the shadow of the walls I halted;
Thence I saw the gruesome gibbets planted,
Witnessed from afar my Master's Passion.
Later, desperation drew me nearer:
Even from the Cross my Lord might utter
One releasing word. Instead of hearing
That one word, I heard a cry and closer
Crept, and heard Him calling: "My God, My God,
Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Then someone
Moistened His parched lips, and whispering, "Father,
Into Thy hands I commend My spirit,"
Low He bowed His head, and all was ended.

Tell me now, is there a God in heaven
Having eyes to look upon that Figure
There upon the cross, in all that landscape
Solely pure, in all unknown creation
Solely true, and looking, say, "I know it,

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Let it be, approve it, still am holy."
Nay, He erred, or hated, or is powerless;
Either our Jehovah is a demon,
Or there is no God at all! I care not!

.

That night, I, Jasper, in the Upper Room
Sat with the silent company; the door
Was locked and bolted; no foot creaked the floor
But two or three would rise in terror, so
The sense of doom possessed us; piteous John
Reclined by me: "Tell me how, Judas gone
Forth from this room, you fared till now," I said;
"Peter left much untold." He rose and led
This poor scribe toward the enclave, and there spoke.

JOHN'S THIRD NARRATIVE

Deeper and yet more deep
This darkness grows, and all I have to keep
Are certain memories;
And now to-night
Within this room there rise
Bright ghosts against the divans—there and there.
See Matthew, not where he sits now, but right
Beneath the lantern, and Nathanael
Gazing at Jesus—nay, they are all gone!
Look, I will keep them out thus, and then tell
My story, while we sit alone,
In darkness, till the tale is done.

There were two suppers: one ere Judas went,
The Paschal Sacrament.
Of that you heard to-day
From Peter; but when Judas went away

THE PASSION

Jesus once more took bread,
And holding it between His shaking hands,
He rose and bowed His head
And thanked His Father for those happy bands
Which for so long had bound
Our little company.
And thanked Him that those golden strands
Could never, never be
In earth or heaven unwound.
And then He broke the bread in two,
Saying:

 "Eat, it is for you;
 Here My broken body see;
 Eat it, and remember Me."

Once more, the while He raised
The agate cup
High in His hands, He rose, and God He praised
For love and life, and gave us then to sup;

 "By My blood which will be shed,
 This cup you drink with Me is made
 A better covenant; do ye
 Drink it, and remember Me."

Weeping, we sipped the cup and passed it on.
Then gazing deep on James, and on me, John,
Who both, so late,
In that Kingdom, which to-night
Seemeth dim and far away,
Had claimed to have peculiar right
To sit in state—

Gazing on us, our Lord began to say:
 "You are the men who stood by Me
 In all My trials faithfully.
 Now you know the solemn cup
 Whereof My companions sup;

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Now at last you understand
What this means: *At My right hand.*
Now you know My judgment throne
Will be the Cross I hang upon.
Behold your royal destiny!
To eat, and drink, and reign with Me."

Last of all Peter drank;
He drained the red wine to the lees,
He kissed the holy grail, he sank
Upon his bended knees.
And Jesus took the grail,
Set it beside the bread,
And put a veil
Of linen over them, and said:
"God to-night hath set His spade
Sharp to earth, and planted there
This new vine. What will it bear?
You the branches, I the vine,
Love the tendrils that entwine,
Everywhere, and none less than
God Himself for husbandman.
All this joy, that wells in Me,
Surges like sap throughout the tree,
All the life within My root
Strengthens you to bring forth fruit.
I have chosen you for Mine;
You are the branches of the vine.
Yet remember My old word:
The servant suffers with his Lord.
Nay, but this is also true,
Whoso loveth Me, loves you.
Weep not, therefore, all your sorrow
Turns again to joy to-morrow.
And when anew, in other wise,
You gaze within your Master's eyes,

THE PASSION

Know this, the lands you enter then
Lie beyond the reach of men.
Far within My heart they lie—
Peace, and Joy, and Victory.
Stare not with such a 'wildered air;
Ask not how ye enter there.
Is this command so strange and new?—
Even as I have loved you
Love ye also one another.
My brother must be all men's brother.
Whither I go he cannot come,
Whose heart is not his brother's home."

Soon after, Jesus rose,
And, standing by the open door,
Gazed out upon the throbbing stars
Riding within the deeper blue
That bounds the moonlit skies;
Gazed out far past the starry floor,
Far past the utmost bars
Of frowning death; then through and through
Our very souls, the harmonies
Of His rich speech did fall and rise,
The while He spoke thus-wise:

"Let not your hearts be troubled, ye
Must trust in God; and trust in Me.
Yonder in My Father's home
Waiteth many a quiet room.
Now I go hence to prepare
Resting-places for you there.
Were there none, should I have said
I should return from out the dead?
Nay, if I go, I shall return
And in My new life you shall learn
That where I am, or near or far,
There those who love Me are."

TOWARD JERUSALEM

Then Thomas interrupted: "Lord, we do not know
Whither Thou dost go;
How then dost Thou say,
We shall know the way?"

"No man," Jesus said, "can see
God the Father, save through Me;
When you wish to find the way,
Come and follow Me, I say."

"Ah," said Philip, "we shall ask you nothing,
If you do but lead us to the Father."

"How long have I been with you,
Philip, yet you never knew
Who was with you. None can know
What I may be. I can but show,
In all I am and say and do,
What the Father is to you.
All the light flung from this bowl
Of clay, O Philip, on your soul,
All the love your heart has known
Those three years, is not My own:
It is God's. But if you yearn
To make your Master some return
For all He has revealed to you,
Do those things He bade you do.
Tasks that lay beyond My power
In My little earthly hour,
You shall compass, when the Son
With the Father is made one."

A silence fell, and from the outer gloom
Some dark thing seemed to creep
Across the room;
Perhaps the shadow of that sorrow
Lurking in the near to-morrow;

THE PASSION

And through that silence you might hear men weep.

"Weep not," Jesus said, "for I
Will ask My Father, when I die
To send another Advocate
Lest you should be desolate.
Orphans? Yea, but you inherit
All I had—My Father's Spirit:
There will be no counter-claim.
Truth to this world is but a name,
But to My followers truth will be
Myself in them, and God in Me.

Hitherto in brother's guise
I have taught before your eyes;
Henceforth closer than a brother,
Hardly in your soul another;
Peace I now to you bequeath,
Now My peace on you I breathe;
Other gifts I give than those
This world on her sons bestows.
Do not fear nor be afraid,
Just believe what I have said;
Only shadow goes away,
Substance verily doth stay.
If you love Me you would dry
All those tears, and rather cry
Tears of joy, because you know
Now I to the Father go.
Yea, you know your souls, as well
As Mine, within His bosom dwell."

Our Lord then drew aside from us a little way,
And kneeling down began to pray;
He prayed to God aloud that thus
We men might know He prayed for us:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

PRAYER

Father, the hour is come :
The task Thou gavest Me
Is finished, and, like foam
That dies upon the sea,

The shadows of this earth
Fade into empty air ;
The Kingdom stirs to birth
In glory, here as there.

I have revealed Thy name
To those Thou gavest Me :
Father, from Thee they came,
I bring them back to Thee ;

For, till they are made One
With those, their chosen band,
The Father and the Son
Still uncompleted stand :

Beggared, and blind, and lame
We tarry, till there meet
All to whom those proclaim
The Gospel, at Thy feet.

The seamless Robe at last
Complete from crown to hem,
And Thou, Thine exile past,
In Me, and I in them.

As we set out
Across the Kidron for Gethsemane
He paused and turned about,

THE PASSION

While we
Clustered around Him, horror-struck to see
His face white as a clout,
His body shaking like an aspen tree:
 "When I sent you forth before,
 Barefoot, purseless, were ye poor?
 Nay; but take your purse to-night,
 See that every sword is bright:
 He was counted among those
 Who broke the Law. The curtains close:
 All the things concerning Me
 Lie within that prophecy."

But when we answered, "Lord, here are two swords,"
And showed each piteous knife
Stained over blade and hilt
With the bright heart's blood of the little life
We late had spilt;
And when He heard my words:
"Rusted are they and rough;
They were both sharp and bright
Before we slew the Paschal lamb to-night,"
Our Master darkly smiled and said,
"Enough, enough!"

I have no words to tell
How the gloom crept into our very marrow
In that dark, sorrowful wood;
How we all fell,
Despairing and exhausted, fast asleep,
While Jesus fought with sorrow;
Even while I slept, He stood
Beside me, and with choking breath:
 "O John," He whispered, "come to Me,
 I am crushed with agony;
 Stay with Me, for this is death."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

While we three rose, He said unto the rest,
"Sit here, while I go yonder," so we pressed
Deeper amid the olives. There He kneeled,
And there in quivering words unsealed
The essential torment of His breaking heart:

"Abba, Abba, Thou hast power,
Even in this latest hour,
Power to take this cup away.
Take it, take it hence, I say;
Nay, I only pray that Thou
Work Thy will, not My will now."

And through the olive boughs
The sighing winds moaned ignorantly and slept
At their own pleasure, while upon His brows
Red beads of anguish crept;
And still no Father's pity stirred
The ominous air. We only heard
The low, persistent "Abba's" rise
And flutter like a dying bird
Against the bolted skies.
James, Peter, and I slept,
Poor faithless fools, until
The prowling pariahs, which crept
Across the Temple hill,
Began to howl. I woke, and down the pool
Of blackness gazed, until there came in view
A little line of flickering light,
Pricking a necklace on the Nubian night,
Gemming the rocks from the Gate Beautiful
Toward the garden. Nearer still they drew:
I heard their voices, heard the garden door
Creak on its hinge; I heard the dead twigs crack
Beneath their feet; then Jesus stood before
Us three. Alack, alack!

THE PASSION

What comfort had we given
Who might have been the ambassadors of heaven?
"Sleeping still? The hour is come:
It is enough; the hour is come:
Lo, the Son of Man betrayed
Into sinners' hands," He said;
"Rise up now, let us away,
The traitor waiteth to betray."

Like a monarch, then,
He strode into the crowd.
His prayer was answered: He was strong again:
"Whom seek ye?" He cried aloud.
"I am He Whom you seek."
Then Judas kissed his Lord upon the cheek,
And said, "Hail, Master!"
"Hail," his Lord replied,
"But is it as a comrade, say,
You set that kiss on Me to-day?"

"Whom do you seek?" once more He called
To the astounded mob. Appalled,
And cowed by His fierce courage, they,
(Had we defended), would have run away.
Ah, but we stood not by,
Most cowardly we fled;
And as we made to fly
Our Master, turning toward the ruffians, said:
"Are ye come out as though to take
A robber now, with sword and stake?
Daily I sat with you and taught,
But not by light of day ye sought
Your prey, nor in the Temple walls,
But here, without, where darkness falls."

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

From Peter you have heard
How we twain followed to the high priest's home.
There, like an evil bird,
Old Annas sat: "We come,"
He lisped, "to ask what doctrine you declare."
Pointing toward the moonlit Temple dome,
Jesus made answer: "Over there
Openly I taught, as well
As in the schools of Israel:
Never in secret spoke one word.
Why ask Me, then? Ask those who heard."

Then someone, seeking that old vulture's smile,
Smote Jesus on the hollow of His cheek
With a sharp-edged Roman tile.

"If," He said, "you have heard Me speak
Evil once, say what you heard;
You are silent, not one word
Recollecting; then must ye
Content yourselves with smiting Me."

He said no more; and on his chair
Old Annas nodded. Summons were writ out
And sent to all the Sanhedrin, to meet
Soon after sunrise. Huddled round about
The Prisoner's feet
Vile slaves and soldiers gambled; all the air
Grew thick and fetid; so His last brief night
Of life slid by. And in the breaking light,
Bound fast with ropes, they hustled Him away
Within the Temple precincts; there the day
Dawned cold and gray;
Without, upon the flags, the snow lay white.
Softly we stole within;
The hall of hewn stone held the Sanhedrin

THE PASSION

In full assembly; and pale Caiaphas,
As we crept in, did pass
Up the long flight of stone,
And sat upon his throne.
Conflicting witnesses
Then made their charges, while the accused stood
Silent, in cruel bonds, in fierce distress
Of body—O, I dare not talk
Of all that piteousness. . . .
Silent He stayed, and let them, as they would,
Confound themselves: Then Caiaphas 'gan walk
Hither and thither, downcast. Suddenly
He stopped beside our Lord
And cried, "You speak no word:
Say, if you are the Christ or are not He."
"Said I Yes, you would reply,
What you tell us is a lie;
Said I, Who then shall Christ be?
Never would you answer Me."

Thereat the high priest pressed
His long arm like a rod
Hard against Jesus' breast:
"I do adjure you, by the living God
Are you the Christ? Tell me, tell me."

"Yea," said Jesus, "I am He."

Caiaphas shuddered, staggered back, and rent
His gorgeous garment with his hands, and screamed,
"He has blasphemed, blasphemed;
It is self-evident.
How will you punish this appalling sin?"
Silence! The very gamblers held their breath,
"What saith

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

The assembled Sanhedrin?" . . .

"Death! Death! Death! Death!"

Thereat creatures you might have thought were men
Showed themselves demons, struck Him, spat on Him,
Blindfolded Him. "Tell us who struck You then?"
They cried, and struck Him: "Blinding should not dim
A prophet's vision." "Tighten up the thongs:
We must away. Only to Rome belongs
Power of doom." The wild procession moves
Past the great doorway, while the fluttering doves
He loved fly upward till the rising sun
Gilds their smooth breasts. "Pilate," the people cry,
"Come forth, come forth." Lord Pilate, passing by,
Pauses and cries, "Well then, what hath He done?"
"We have not brought
The prisoner here because we sought
For trial," someone snarled. "He is condemned!"
"Deal with Him then by your so adequate
And self-sufficient law," sneered Rome, irate.
"Nay, sir, once Moses' law
Sufficed; alas, of late
It hath been maimed
By Cæsar's mighty paw.
Death lies in your hand, not in ours, Pilate."
"Death in my hand?" he stammered: "so the crime
Is capital?"

Then to an ounce of truth
Those clever priests added a pound of lies:
"Now since some little time
This upstart dangerous youth
Has called Himself a king; no king have we
Saving great Cæsar." Pilate, in surprise
Scanned that Figure, meek, unkempt,

THE PASSION

Roped and silent: "Man," said he,
More in pity than contempt,
"Art *thou* a King?"

"My Kingdom lies
Beyond the gaze of mortal eyes."

And Pilate, standing there,
Exquisite, polished, seemed a tawdry thing
Beside that King.
I think he was aware
Of something great. He cried out, "Have a care,
Gentle barbarians, because I see
No fault in Him." "No fault! a pretty fiction!"
Shouted one Sanhedrist,
"He has sown rebels all through Galilee."
Said Pilate, "Hist,
This fellow is in Herod's jurisdiction;
Herod must try Him. Hence! Let Herod judge."
So must our swooning Master trudge
The Tyropœan bridge, and so ascend
To Herod's palace. Trembling we did wend
Our timid ways behind. Herod was glad,
Exceeding glad to see
Not John the Baptist risen from the dead,
As guilty fear
Long fancied Him to be. . . .
"Doth not the fellow hear?"
The Tetrarch cried; for many times in vain
He questioned Jesus, who in pale disdain
Not one word said; carelessly Herod played
An half hour with his prey,
Decked Him in purple samite, stitched and hemmed
Fantastic wise. Seeing Him thus arrayed,
Jeered at Him, tired of Him, sent Him away
To Pilate uncondemned.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Vexed, Pilate thereat planned a second ruse.
The people loved this prophet. "Hark," said he,
"This is the season of your feast;
Rome has hitherto released
One prisoner at the feast;
So choose
Anyone you please; now say,
Shall I set Jesus free to-day?"
Then swiftly—as he turned aside to take
A slave girl's urgent message from his wife—
Those priests moved through the mob, each like a snake
Hissing out threats: "You dare not save His life;
Say, Yes, you will have Jesus: not this one—
Jesus Barabbas." Pilate's eyes then sought
His wife's brief note: "I had a dream," wrote she,
"This is an innocent man, O harm Him not!"
The note was hidden, and pale Pilate soon
Heard the mob shouting, "Let Barabbas free."
"What then?" he stammered. "What . . . shall I . . .
What shall I do with Jesus?" "Crucify,"
They cried, and all they cried was, "Crucify." . . .
"What evil hath He done then?" . . . "Crucify."

One moment only did I turn mine eye
From Jesus' face; Pilate I then beheld
Uplifting in his trembling, jeweled hand
A sorry little jug, and pouring down
Water into a soldier's hollow shield.
Therein he washed his delicate hands; poor clown,
I ween
He did not make them clean.
He only could
Wash off a little scent,
A little sweat: "See, I am innocent,"
He cried, "of this man's blood."

"His blood be on ourselves and on our seed,"
Shrieked priests and people, and indeed
The priests had need
To shriek and shout,
Since they had stayed without
The Gentile's dwelling, lest they should
Defile their bodies. Who could see
What tint their souls might be?

Then Pilate muttered, "Scourging may suffice
To appease them;" bade his lictors scourge Him twice,
So the thonged whip, each thong inlaid with lead,
Curled round the quivering flesh, and cut and tore
Until the blood ran red,
And made a great pool on the marble floor.

Lo, the young slave, who wove the crown of thorn
For Jesus' brow, goes blubbering toward his dam,
His little hand all torn;
He hides his face, while bestial soldiers ram
The spines in deep.
"Nay, do not weep,
You did your task, you wove it well,"
Said Jesus.

Ah, how shall I tell
The hideous tale? They clad Him like a king;
They danced like demons in a crazy ring
Around His person, mocked Him, spat on Him,
Struck Him, and tortured, till it all grew dim
Before my swooning eyes. . . .
Waking again, I heard the Roman say,
"Now are ye sated with His agonies?
Behold the man. . . . Take It. . . . Take It away."
None then had known Him, even she, who bore
Him at her breast, had known her son no more.

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

Like idiots in a slaughter-house, the priests
Now lust and fume. "The Cross! The Cross!" they
 roar,
"Do that yourselves then, ye barbarian beasts,"
Yelled Pilate.

 "Nay, thou fool,
It is for thee to say,
For Rome to say;" the words fell clear and cool
Across the din, and by the porch I saw
A Jewish lawyer, gray,
Repulsive; "This," he added, "is Rome's hour;
Israel states the law,
But Rome assumes the power
To execute the law. The law hath said
The Nazarene ought to die, because He made
Himself the Son of God." . . . "Son of which god?"
Said Pilate with averted eyes: "Tell me
Thine excellent pedigree. . . .
Dost Thou not answer? Know, my merest nod
Dooms Thee, or sets Thee free."

I dared not look upon that quivering rod
Of swelling wounds, and sores, and clotting blood:
That was not Jesus; nathless as of yore
His own voice came, and its deep cadence bore
A noble pity:

 "Thou wouldst have . . .
Were it not given thee from above . . .
No dominion over Me.
Less guilty, then, art thou than he
Who delivered Me to thee."

Pilate escorted Jesus out again
To Gabbatha; "I must release this man,"
Trembling, he cried.
But ere his voice had died

THE PASSION

Among the pillars, someone shouted, "Lo,
If you release this man you show
Yourself untrue
To Rome. Whoever says, 'I am a king'
Essays thereby to maim the imperial wing."

Pilate arranged his ring,
And twitched his yellow toga: "Hey, hey, hey,"
The bloodhounds bayed; "put Him away,
Crucify Him, crucify."
"Shall I crucify your king?"
"We have not any king," they cry,
"Saving Cæsar."

Pilate's patience broke:
Within their subtle web his will lay spent;
Turning away he spoke
The words they lusted for; then leant
Toward the Prisoner. I had rather been
That dumb incarnate woe
Than him who turned to go
Back to this world, taking what he had seen
In Jesus' eyes; taking that burning look
For weal or woe
To nurse within his breast,
A lifelong guest.

I, no less wretched, took
My coward way; I fled.

Out on the road I met His mother. Grief
Kindled the ashes of her youth to red
And burning pity. "Come with me," she said,
Our anguish will have one relief:
We shall stand by
And bid kind Death come quick
To cure His agony!

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

O haste, I hear the sound of tramping feet,
Shouting I hear. See, down in yonder street
The crowds are thick.
Behold my Child, my Son!
He stays to wipe away
The blood and sweat: now one
Hands Him her head cloth; now He wipes His face
Therewith—O sister Berenice, full of grace,
May God reward thee! Nay,
That look was thy reward!"

So on we went
Till Jesus just beyond Damascus Gate
Stumbled and fell down prone
Beneath the gruesome weight,
And lay there, spent
And half-unconscious. The centurion
Shouted an order, and a soldier pressed
Old Simon of Cyrene with his spear,
And pointed toward the cross; shaking with fear,
The negro raised it and moved slowly on;
And Mary beat her breast,
And all the women of Jerusalem
Began to wail and weep, while soldiers came
And prodded Jesus till He rose; His eyes
Were hidden in His wounds, but still He heard
Their mournful cries
And spake this word:

"Daughters of Jerusalem,
Weep not for Me, but weep for them
Who now remain, your little ones,
Yourselves, your kin. One day your sons
Will cry, *Now thrice accursèd be
The kindly breasts that nourished me.*
One day will cry, *Thrice blessed are
The barren wombs, that never bare!*

THE PASSION

Yea, if deeds like these are done
Beneath a calm unclouded sun,
What shall they do in that dread day
Of doom when Sion wilts away,
And smoke and blood and fiery cloud
Weave her silent form a shroud?"

At last we came
To that skull-shapen hill of Golgotha;
And there the deed of shame
Was ghastly done.
Two sorry malefactors there I saw
On either side of Him. Then came there one
And nailed the placard Pilate lately framed,
High on the cross: JESUS OF NAZARETH,
KING OF THE JEWS: ("Nay, but He only saith
He is our King," the priests had all exclaimed.
"What I have writ I have writ," Pilate said.)
And now, even while the blood was spouting red
From the in-driven nails, I heard
My Master speak this word:
"Father, forgive these men, for lo,
They know not what they do."

Beneath His Cross the Roman soldiers sate
And shook their dice
And gambled for His raiment. Then there came
A piteous highborn dame
Bearing an opiate,
And twice she offered it to Him, and twice
He shook His head.
And one of those thieves hanging near Him said,
"If Thou be Christ, then save Thyself and us."
"Nay, speak not thus,"

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

The other moaned, "for we
Only receive our due reward, but He
Hath done no wrong. . . . O Lord, remember me
When Thou dost come
Into Thine own Kingdom."

And Jesus turned His fading eyes:

"In Paradise,

Verily I say to thee

Thou shalt walk to-day with Me."

By then I do not think that He

Could any longer see.

Yet He was 'ware of Mary standing by,

And me with her. "Lady," I heard Him say,

"Lady, behold thy son,

And thou, behold thy mother." So I John,

For sign to Him and her that I had heard

Love's dying word,

Breathed out "Amen," and bent and kissed her hand.

The slow hours passed away; the shamefast land

Lay dark and silent, only where He sate

Demoniac voices hissed: "Thou Dark Unknown,

If Thou be Christ," they cried, "why not come down,

And save Thyself?" So ringed all round with hate

He hung, while from the ebony heavens there fell

Petals of snow, and paved that earthly hell

With whiteness for His passing; yet His blood

Ran hot and red

Down the rough rood

Upon the fallen snow.

And, while they mocked, He said,

"My God, My God, why hast Thou

Forsaken Me?"

THE PASSION

I could see now
He was about to pass. "Ah, how
I thirst," He whispered: and one came
And cooled His lips; the dying flame
Of life leaped up: He spoke once more
As it were through an opening door:
"Father, Father, I commend
My soul to Thee."

What sound did rend
The dread air then? Who through the gloom
Cried, "*It is finished!*" Did He come,
The Very Father, and declare
The mighty Task completed there?
I think He did, I think the air
Shook in that instant with the breath
Of God. And we all whispered, "Death!"

.

Long silent sat we in the dim enclave
After those final words. His spirit all spent,
John bowed his head and wept. On the bright wave
Of his gold hair I left one kiss, and went.

Next day on Olivet a figure came
Toward me running, all his face aflame
With ecstasy, and in his hands a bough
Of budding blossom.

"Peter, is it thou?"
I cried. "So changed, leaping at such a pace,
I know thee not." Then he with happy face:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

PETER'S THIRD NARRATIVE

Lo! the branch is quickened, lo! the color
Kindles in the Bough. So am I quickened
Who was cold and dead. The Christ is risen.
God hath caused His face to shine upon us
Once again, and we are saved and quickened.
Lo! the sap is pulsing through the branches.
Jesus is the vine: we are the branches.
Early in the morning I awakened:
There within the garden of His anguish
Saw that Vine, myself one little tendril
Limp thereon, and felt the sap within me
Whisper *Life*—just there the worm of conscience
Late had gnawed, and whispered *Death*, and whis-
pered
“Never, never, nevermore forgiveness.”
Ah, but what was that John told me, “Father,”
Jesus breathed aloud when He was dying,
“What they do they know not, so forgive them.”
These words set me thinking. Had His whole life
Not just been that one word spelled out letter
After letter? And at Cæsarea
Had He not rebuked me, cried, “Thou savorest
Not the thoughts of God”? I had denied Him
Naming that vindictive God of battles
Who had risen between me and the vision
Jesus gave us of His Heavenly Father.
“Nay,” I said, “what Heavenly Father fronting
Utter holiness could let it suffer
So upon that Cross? There is no Father. . . .”
Horror of great darkness fell upon me
Till once more Jesus’ rebuke came leaping
Toward me through the gloom, “Thou dost not savor,
Peter, of God’s thoughts!” Then was that gibbet

THE PASSION

God's own thought for Jesus? If the meaning
Was, of His life, to *be* God's forgiveness,
Then was not the Cross God's way of branding
That word on the souls of men forever?

So the dawn began, and I remembered
How of late the Master's thoughts, like sea birds
Homing in the dusk, alighted always
Softly on the selfsame page prophetic:
"Wounded, wounded even for our transgressions,
Bruised for our iniquities, chastised
So we might have peace. We are healed with His
stripes."

More than all the others saving Judas
Needed I that costly peace and healing.
Judas had sought other ways to find it:
Maybe he did find it there in Sheol:
Ah, but I had found it on Golgotha:
Wounded, wounded, even for *my* transgressions
Bruised for my iniquity, chastised,
So I might have peace. I am healed with His stripes:
Verily these things which God expounded
Through the vision of His holy prophets
Lie at last fulfilled. Messiah suffers.
Dayspring tarries, but beyond the ridges
Shafts of glory leap and dart. The prophet
Adds one other word, He, Christ, Messiah,
Seeing of the travail of His spirit
Shall be satisfied. Vision! Contentment!
Dead men had not these. Jesus was living,
Watching for the harvest of His anguish.
Might I still be garnered in that reaping?
So I mused, when Mary passed me singing:

HE IS BECOME MY SONG

MARY'S SONG

O many may chant of His beauty, His courage, His
kindness,
But my song will have its beginning,
Its end, at His feet.

How friendless this Valley, how fearful this Shadow
of Death,
More fearful and friendless a Valley
Did wend at His feet,

When He left the City of God for the streets of my
sinning,
When He stooped and forgave, while I weeping,
Did bend at His feet.

And Love that has traveled so far can take this last
Valley:
I see Thee! I worship again
O Friend, at Thy feet!

Through the olive glade I passed and left her
Kneeling there, and knew the veil was lifted,
Rent in twain, for her, that shrouds the Eternal
Ever, from our customary eyesight.
Then, even while I hastened on, for me too,
Something lifted; I too saw the substance
Whose bright shadow weaves a passing tenant
Here, in this world. Just then for a little
I awoke, and all the shadows faded;
Jesus walked beside me in the garden,
While the birds sang on, since they but praised Him!
There beneath my quickened feet the ashes

THE PASSION

Lay, of my old life. My Lord was standing
Full within a beam immense. His shadow
Fell upon me while the beam pulsated
Far behind, till it was lost in brightness
Blinding, absolute, but here it builded
Round my Savior's head a burning halo.

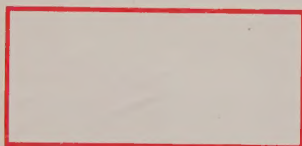
Gazing long on that mine eyes were darkened;
Veils of finitude once more descended,
But the Word, the Spirit, still is with me.
That Word is the Gospel which I give you.

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"O great Apostle," I said, "my mind cannot
Yet grasp those mysteries by careful thought,
Nor wind them to a creed. He could not move
My pettier being to such heights of love
As you attain. Yet on my heart there lies,
Like a moon's path at midnight, clear surmise
That such a life as His could not be held,
Even of Death. Virtue can surely weld
A mightier sword than sin, nor hath she set
The bounds to her behavior: here she met
Say, for the first time, full and free response
To her demands, what wonder for the nonce
If something new transpires? We fare afar
Where the great mists, the hidden secrets are.
Yea, but I scan with yearning, hoping eyes
That far-off land whence the great rivers rise,
That Resurrection Land from whence must come
Streams I behold in dreams bearing the whole world
home."

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